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10 Month 1 1886

# Apples of Gold

FOR

## Young Men and Women,

AND

## A CROWN of GLORY for Old Men and Women.

OR,

*The Happiness of being good betimes, And The Honour of being an Old Disciple.*

Clearly and fully discovered, and closely and faithfully applied.

ALSO,

*The Young Mans Objections answered, And the Old Mans Doubts resolved.*

---

By *THOMAS BROOKS* heretofore Preacher of the Gospel at St. *Margarets* New *Fishstreet-hil.*

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The Fifth Edition corrected.

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*But I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth,* 1 King. 18 12.

*The Hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in a way of Righteousness, Prov.* 16. 31.

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*London,* Printed by *R. I.* for *John Hancock,* to be sold at the first Shop in *Popes-head-Ally,* next to *Corn-hill,* near the *Royal-Exchange.* 1664.

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TO

# All Young Persons throughout the Nations,

especially those (of both Sexes) who begin to turn their faces towards

# ZION.

Dear Hearts,

A *Word spoken in due season, how good is it? it is often like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver; many times such a word is sweet, pre-*

Pro. 15. 23 25. 10. 11. A word spoken (*gnalophnau*) upon his wheels, that is, with a due concurrence and observation of all circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the wheels upon which our words and speeches should run, such a word is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver.

cious, pleasing, delectable, and strong in its operation.

A company of near friends Dineing together one Sabbath day, one that was at Table (to prevent impertinent discourse) said, That it was a question whether they should all go to Heaven or no, which struck them all into a dump, and caused every one to enter into a serious consideration with themselves one thought if any of this company go to Hell, it must bee I, and so thought another, and another, and indeed, so thought almost every one then present, as well servants that waited, as those that sat at the Table, as it was afterwards acknowledged and (through the mercy and blessing of God) this Speech so wrought upon the Spirits of most of them, that it proved the first instrumental means of their conversion.

I have my hopes, through grace, that this Treatise, though it bee sown in weakness, yet by the blessing of the most High upon it, it may rise in power, and bee an instrumental means of the winning of Souls to Christ.

Christ, which is my highest ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnal reasonings, that might otherwise have stifled this babe in the wombe, and kept it from ever seeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperour, that delighted in no undertakings so much as those which in the esteem of his Councellours and Captains were deemed most difficult and impossible, if they said such or such an enterprize would never be accomplished, it was argument enough to him, to make the adventure, and he usually prospered, he seldome miscarried.

I have never found greater and choiser blessings to attend any of my poor weak Labours, than those that have been brought forth into the world through the greatest straits and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus reports, that one telling a Souldier, going to war against the Persians, that they would hide the Sun with their Arrows, he answered we shall fight best in the shade; nothing should discourage nor dishearten a souldier of Christ, 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. Christ saith to all his Souldiers (as the

*Valerius Maximus. lib. 3. c. de Fiducia.*

Hist. of France. p. 196.

*black Prince his Father said to him, fighting as it were in blood to the knees, and in great distress) either vanquish or dye. Men of no resolution, or of weak resolution, will bee but little serviceable to the good of souls; such watchmen as will bee free from the blood of souls, and bee serviceable to the interest of Christ in turning sinners from darknesse to light, must be men of spirit and resolution.*

*August. de tempore Serm. 256.*

*I remember St.* Austin *beginneth one of his sermons thus* (Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes flos etatis, periculum mentis) *To you is my speech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the minde.*

*So say I, to you, O young men, do I dedicate the ensuing Treatise, and that first, because the matter contained therein, doth primarily and eminently concern you.*

*And secondly, Because of an earnest desire that I have of your internal and eternal welfare.*

*And thirdly, because there is most hope of doing good amongst you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatise.)*

*And*

*And fourthly, To countermine the great underminer of your ſouls, whoſe great deſign is to poyſon you, and to poſſeſs you in the morning of your daies.*

*Fifthly, To provoke others that are more able and worthy, to be more ſerviceable to you in declaring themſelves, fully on this very ſubject, which none yet have done that I know of, though it bee a point of as great concernment to young perſons, (eſpecially) as any I know in all the Scriptures.*

*Sixthly and laſtly, Becauſe there are very many that do lye in wait to deceive, corrupt, and poyſon your perſons with God-diſhonouring, Chriſt-denying, Conſcience-waſting, and Soul damning opinions, principles, and blaſphemies.*

Eph. 4.14. A blinde eye is worſe than a lame foot, hee that had the leproſie in his head; was to be pronounced utterly unclean.

*I have read of one who boaſted and gloried in this, that he had ſpent thirty years in corrupting and poyſoning of youth; doubtleſſe many wretches, many monſters, there bee among us, who make it their buſineſſe, their glory, their all, to delude and draw young perſons to thoſe dangerous errours and blaſphemies that lead to deſtruction. Er-*

rour and folly (saith one very well) bee the knots of Satan, wherewith he tyes Children to the stake to bee burnt in Hell.

There is a Truth in what the Tragœdian said long since (Venenum in auro bibitur) Poyson is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold; So is an errour or by-notion sooneſt taken into the judgement and conscience from persons of the faireſt carriage, and smootheſt conversations. Errour is so foul an Hagge, that if it should come in its own shape, a man would loathe it, and fly from it, as from Hell.

If Jezabel had not painted her face, she had not gotton so many young doting Adulterers to have followed her to their own ruine.

Ah! Young men, young men, the blessing of the Lord upon your serious and diligent perusal of this Treatise, may be a happy means to preserve you from being ensnared and deluded by those monsters who compasse Sea and Land to make Proselites for Hell.

Mat. 23. 15.

And thus I have given you the reasons of my dedicating this Treatise to the service

*service of your souls. I would willingly presume that it will be as kindly taken, as it is cordially tendred; I hope none of you, into whose hands it may fall, will say as once* Antipater *King of* Macedonia *did, when one presented him with a Book treating of Happinesse, his answer was* (Ou Scholazo) *I have no leisure.*

*Ah! Young men and women, young men and virgins, as you tender the everlasting welfare of your souls, as you would escape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would have an Interest in Christ, a pardon in your bosomes, as you would be blessed here, and glorious hereafter, finde time, finde leisure, to read over and over the following Treatise, which is purposely calculated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects, to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives that hath prevailed with me to appear once more in Print, and they are these,*

*First, having preached a Sermon occasionally upon these words (on which this following discourse is built) I*

*was*

was earnestly importuned to print the Sermon, by some worthy friends, I did as long as in modesty I could, withstand their desires (judging it not worthy of them) but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings and comings in of God were such, as hath occasioned that one Sermon to multiply into many. Luther tells us that when hee first began to turn his back upon Popery, he intended no more, but to withstand Popish Pardons, and selling Indulgencies; yet neither would God, or his enemies let him alone, till hee resolved with Moses not to leave a hoof of Popery unopposed, &c. God many times in the things of the Gospel, carries forth his Servants beyond their intentions, beyond their resolutions. But

Secondly, The kinde acceptance, and good quarter that my other peeces have found in the world, and those signal and multiplyed blessings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Christ, and to the building up of others in Christ, hath encouraged me to present this Treatise to the world, hoping that the Lord hath a blessing in store for this also. Thirdly,

*Thirdly, That I might in some measure make up others neglects, whose age, whose parts, whose experiences, whose graces hath long called upon them to do something considerable in this way, and that they may be provoked by my weak assay to do better, and to make up what is wanting through my invincible infirmities, and spiritual wants and weaknesses, which are so many, as may well make a sufficient Apologie for all the defects and weaknesses that in this Treatise shall appear to a serious judicious eye. But*

*Fourthly, The love of Christ and souls hath constrained mee to it; as there is an attractive, so there is a compulsive virtue in Divine Love. Love to Christ and souls, will make a man willing to spend and be spent; hee that prayes himself to death, that preaches himself to death, that studies himself to death, that sweats himself to death, for the honour of Christ, and good of souls, shall bee no looser in the end: Divine Love is like a rod of Myrtle, which, as* Pliny *reports, makes the Traveller that carries it in his hand,*

2 Cor. 5. 14.
2 Cor. 12. 15.
*Solus amor nescit difficultates.*
Love knows no difficulties

*that*

*that hee [illegible] never bee faint or weary: Divine Love is very operative,* (si non operatur, non est) *if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all; Divine Love, like fire, is not idle but active, he that loves cannot be barren; love will make the soul constant and abundant in well doing. God admits none to Heaven* (*saith* Justin Martyr) *but such as can perswade him by their works, that they love him. The very Heathen hath observed, that God doth not love his children with a weak womanish affection, but with a strong masculine love; and certainly, they that love the Lord strongly, that love him with a Masculine love, they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But.*

Seneca.

*Fifthly, I observe that Satan and his instruments are exceeding busie and unwearied in their designs, attempts, and endeavours, in these daies, to corrupt, and poyson, to defile and destroy the young, the tender, the most hopeful, and most flourishing plants among us.*

It is said of *Marcellus* the *Roman* General, that hee could not bee quiet (*Nec via ctor, nec victus*) neither Conquered, nor Conquerer; such a one is Satan.

*Latimer told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn*

diligence,

*diligence, and vigilence [illegible] phets and Apostles, the[illegible]arn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Dioceſſes, and acts by an untired power, ſeeking whom hee may deſtroy; when the Wolves are abroad, the Shepherd ſhould not ſleep, but watch, yea double his watch, remembring that hee were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one ſoul upon him, by his negligence, or otherwiſe.*

*Satan is a Lyon, not a Lamb, a roaring Lyon, not a ſleepy Lyon, not a Lyon ſtanding ſtill, but a Lyon going up and down as not being contented with the Prey, the many millions of ſouls hee hath got, hee ſeeks whom hee may ſip up at a draught, as that word (καταπίν) in the 1 Pet. 5. 8. imports, his greateſt deſign, is to fill Hell with ſouls, which ſhould awaken every one to bee active, and to do all that may be done to prevent his deſign, and to help forward the ſalvation of ſouls.*

*St. Chryſoſtom compares good Paſtors to Fountains that ever ſend forth waters,* Chryſ. in Mat. Ho. 15,

waters, or Conduits that are alwaies running, though no pail be put under. But.

Sixthly, and lastly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in, and the more work any man doth for Christ on Earth, the better pay he shall have when he comes to Heaven. Every man shall at last reap as he sows; Opportunities of doing service for Christ, and souls, are more worth than a world; therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how soon I may put off this earthly Tabernacle; and remembring, that as there is no believing, nor repenting in the grave, so there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor printing in the grave, we had need to bee up and doing, to put both hands to it, and to do all we do with all our might, knowing, that the night draws on upon us, wherein no man can work.

1 Cor. 15. ult.

2 Cor. 9. 6

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14.

Eccl 9. 10

John 9. 4.

A Christians dying day is the Lords pay day, that is a time to receive wages, not to do work. And thus I have given the World a true account of the Reasons that moved mee to print the following discourse.

There

*There are many things in this Treatise that are of use to all, and several things of moment, that are not every day preached nor read; I have made it as pleasurable as time would permit, that so it might bee the more profitable to the Reader, and that I might the better take the young man by (a holy) craft, which is a high point of Heavenly wisdome, there being no wisdome to that of winning of souls. I shall now follow this poor peece with my weak prayers, that it may be so blest from Heaven, as that it may bring in some, and build up others, and do good to all; And so rest,*

2 Cor. 12. ch. 15. 2. Pro. 11. 30

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel of Christ,

*THOMAS BROOKS.*

THE

THE

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1 *If you would be good betimes, then you must labour to be acquainted with four things betimes, as*

1 *You must labour to acquaint your selves with*

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THE

# THE Young-Mans Duty AND EXCELLENCY.

1 KING. 14. ch. 13. v.

*And all* Israel *shall mourn for him, and Bury him: for hee only of* Jeroboam *shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

---

I SHALL only stand upon the latter part of this Verse, because that affords me matter most suitable to my design. Be-

— *Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijah's* life, *in him was found some good thing towards the Lord*, &c. when *Abijah* was a Childe, *vers.* 3. 12. when he was in his young and tender years, he had the seeds of grace in him, hee had the Image of God upon him, hee could discern between good and evil, and he did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (Nagnar) translated Childe, *vers.* 3. is very often applied to such as wee call Youth, or young men, *Exod.* 24. 5. *Numb.* 6. 11. 1 *Sam.* 2. 17, *&c.*

Of such age and prudence was *Abijah*, as that hee could chuse good, and refuse evil, hee was a *Lot* in *Sodome*, hee was good among the bad, the bent and frame of his heart was towards that which was good, when the heart both of his Father and Mother was

נַעַר

Is used for a young man, or stripling, Gen. 22. 5. and often for a servant, though hee bee a man of ripe years, Est. 2. 2. Such as one Evangelist calleth young men, Luke 12. 45. another calleth fellow-servants, Mat. 24. 49.

was ſet upon evil.

*Abijah* began to be good betimes, hee croſt that peſtilent Proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devil. 'Tis the glory and goodneſſe of God, that hee will take notice of the leaſt good that is in any of his, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarahs* ſpeech to *Abraham*, and that was this, ſhee called him *Lord*, and this God mentions for her honour and commendation, *ſhee called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of Wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one ſhining Pearl; than upon a heap of rubbiſh. God findes a Pearl in *Abijah*, and hee puts it into his Crown, to his eternal commendation. *There was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord, &c.* For the words,

*There was found in him*, The Hebrew word *Matſa*, ſometimes ſignifies finding without ſeeking, *Iſa.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that ſought me not*, ſo *Pſal.* 116. *verſ.* 3. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed mee*, and

*and the pains of hell got hold upon mee, I found trouble and sorrow.* I found trouble which I look't not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it. There's an elegancy in the Original. The pains of Hell gat hold upon mee; So wee read, but the Hebrew is, The pains of Hell found mee (one word signifies both) they found mee, I did not finde them. *There was found in* Abijah *some good thing towards the Lord*, i.e. there was found in him without searching, or seeking, some good thing towards the Lord, it was plain and visible enough, men might see and observe it without enquiring, or seeking, they might runne and read some good thing in him towards the Lord.

Secondly, The word sometime signifies, finding by seeking, or inquiry, *Isa.* 55. 6. *Seek yee the Lord, while hee may bee found, &c.* So upon search and inquiry, there was found in *Abijah* (though young) some good thing toward the Lord.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, ſometime the word notes the obtaining of that which is ſufficient, *Joſh.* 17. 16. *Numb.* 11.22. *Judg.* 21.14. in *Abijah* there was that good in him towards the Lord, that was ſufficient to evidence the work of grace upon him, ſufficient to ſatisfie himſelf and others, of the goodneſs and happineſs of his condition; though hee died in the prime, and flower of his daies, &c.

*And in him was found ſome good thing*; the Hebrew word (*Tob*) that is here rendred good, ſignifies,

Firſt, That which is right and juſt, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. See thy matters are good and right, *i. e.* juſt and right.

Secondly, That which is profitable, *Deut.* 6. 11. *Houſes full of all good things*, *i. e.* houſes full of all profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleaſing, 2 *Sam.* 19. 27. *Do what is good in thine eyes*, *i. e.* do what is pleaſing in thine eyes.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That which is full and compleat, *Gen.* 15. 15. *Thou shalt be buried in a good old age*, i. e. thou shalt bee buried when thine age is full and compleat.

Fiftly, That which is joyful and delightful, 1 *Sam.* 25. 8. *Wee come in a good day*, i. e. we come in a joyful and delightful day; now put all together, and you may see that there was found in *Abijah* when hee was young, that which was right and just, that which was pleasing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.

In the Words you have two things that are most considerable.

First, That this Young Mans goodnesse was towards the Lord God of *Israel*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who yet are bad, yea, very bad towards God. Some there are who are very kinde to the creature, and yet very unkinde to their Creator; many mens goodnes

This age affords many such Hypocrites, such Monsters, &c.

neſs towards the creature is like the riſing Sun, but their goodneſs towards the Lord is like a morning Cloud, or as the early dew, which is ſoon dryed up by the Sun-Beams, but *Abijah*'s goodneſſe was towards the Lord, his goodneſſe faced the Lord, it look'd towards the glory of God. Two things make a good Chriſtian, good actions, and good aims; And though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzzah*) yet a bad aim makes a good action bad (as in *Jehu*) whoſe juſtice was approved, but his policy puniſhed, the firſt Chapter of *Hoſea*, and the fourth verſe, doubtleſſe *Abijahs* actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodneſſe was towards the Lord.

Hoſ. 6. 4

There may be *Malum opus in bona materia*, as in *Jehues* zeal.

It's recorded of the *Catanenſes*, that they made a ſtately Monument of Kingly magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons, who took their aged Parents upon

their backs, and carried them through the fire, when their Fathers house was all in a flame; these young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijahs goodness towards the Lord*, &c? A man cannot bee good towards the Lord, but hee will bee good towards others; but a man may bee good towards others, that is not good towards the Lord: Oh that mens practises did not give too loud a Testimony every day to this assertion! &c.

Happy are those fouls that with the Sturgion or Crab-fish can swim gainst the stream of custome and example, and that with *Atticus*, can cleave to the right, though losing side.

Secondly, Hee was good among the bad, *Hee was good in the house of* Jeroboam; 'tis in fashion to seem (at least) to bee good among the good; but to bee really good among those that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not only a truth of goodnesse, but a great degree of goodness; this young man was good, *in the house of* Jeroboam, *who made all* Israel *to sin*; who was naught, who was very naught, who was stark naught: and yet

yet *Abijah*, as the Fishes which live in the Salt-Sea are fresh; so though he lived in a (sink) a sea of wickedness, yet hee retained his *goodnesse towards the Lord*.

They say Roses grow the sweeter, when they are planted by Garlick: they are sweet and rare Christians indeed, who hold their goodnesse, and grow in goodness, where wickedness sits on the throne; and such a one the young man in the Text was.

To bee Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaff, Pearls among Cockles, and Roses among Thorns, is excellent.

To bee a *Jonathan* in *Sauls* Court, to bee an *Obadiah* in *Ahabs* Court, to bee an *Abedmelech* in *Zedechias* Court, and to be an *Abijah* in *Jeroboams* Court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To bee a *Lot* in *Sodome*, to bee an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to bee a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to bee a *Nehemiah* in *Damascо*, and to bee a *Job* in the Land of *Husse*, is to bee a Saint a-

mong Devils, and ſuch a one the man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm, that *Venus* never appeared ſo beautious, as when ſhee ſate by black *Vulcans* ſide. Gracious ſouls ſhine moſt clear when they be ſet by black conditioned perſons. *Stephens* face never ſhin'd ſo Angelically, ſo gloriouſly (in the Church) where all were virtuous, as before the Council, where all were vicious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a ſhining Sun in *Jeroboams* Court, which for prophanneſs and wickedneſs, was a very hell.

The words that I have choſen to inſiſt upon, will afford us ſeveral obſervations, but I ſhall onely name one, which I intend to proſecute at this time, and that is this, *viz.*

## CHAP. I.

*Doct.* *That it is a very deſirable and commendable thing, for young men to bee really good betimes.*

Other

OThers Scriptures ſpeak out this to bee a truth, beſides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the ſecond of *Chronicles* Chap. 34. 1, 2, 3. verſes. *Joſiah* was eight years old when hee began to Reign, and hee reigned in *Jeruſalem* one and thirty years. And hee did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, and walked in the wayes of *David* his Father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left; For in the eighth year of his Reign, while hee was yet young, hee began to ſeek after the God of *David* his Father: And in the twelfth year, hee began to purge *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, from the high places, and the Groves, and the carved Images, and the Molten Images. 'Twas *Obadiah*'s honour, that hee feared the Lord from his youth. And *Timothies* Crown that hee knew the Scripture from a Childe; and St. *Johns* Joy, that hee found Children walking in the truth;

Job 32. 4, 5, 6, 7.

1 King. 18. 12.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

2 Epiſt. 4. v.

truth; this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosome; to spend further time in the proving of this truth, would bee but to light Candles, to see the Sun at Noon.

The Grounds and Reasons of this point, *viz.*

*That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to bee really good betimes*; are these that follow.

Deut. 6. 5. ch. 11. 13. *Augustine* beginneth one of his Sermons thus (*Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis. Auguſt. de tempore Serm* 246. To you is my speech, O young men! the flower of age, the danger of the mind.)

## Reason I.

First, Because the Lord commands it; and divine Commands are not to be disputed, but obeyed. In the 12 Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and the 1 verse, *Remember now thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth, while the evil daies come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*: Remember now, I say now: now is an atome, it will puzzle the wisdome of a Philosopher, the skill of an Angel, to divide: Now is a Monosyllable in all Learned Languages.

*Remember*

55 1

*Remember now thy Creatour*: Remember him presently, instantly for thou dost not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canst not tell what deadly sin, what deadly temptation, what deadly judgement may over-take thee; if thou dost not now, even now *remember thy Creatour.*

*Remember now thy Creatour*: Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to desire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an interest in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walke with him. *Remember now thy Creatour*, the Hebrew is *Creatours*, Father, Sonne, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Councel was called in Heaven, in the first of *Genesis*, and 29 verse. *Remember thy Creatours*, remember the Father, so as to know him, so as to bee inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son, so as to beleeve in him, so as to rest upon him,

him so as to embrace him, and so as to make a compleat resignation of thy self to him. Remember the Spirit, so as to hear his voice, so as to obey his voyce, so as to feel his presence, and so as to experience his influence, &c.

*Remember now thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth*; he doth not say, in the time of thy youth, but *in the dayes of thy youth*, to note, that our life is but a few daies; 'tis but a vapour, a span, a flower, a shadow, a dream; and therefore *Seneca* saith well, *that though death bee before the Old mans face, yet hee may bee as near the Young mans back, &c.*

Aug. l. 1. Confess.

Mans life is the shadow of smoak, the dream of a shadow; one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

Ah! Young men, God commands you to bee good betimes. Remember, young men, that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his commands, who by another is able to command you into nothing,

thing, or into Hell. To act or run croſs to Gods expreſs Command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth, as you may ſee in that ſad Story, 1 *King.* 13. 24. *Verſe*, &c.

Let young men put all their carnal Reaſons, though never ſo many and weighty, into one ſcale, and Gods abſolute Command in the other, and then write *Tekel* upon all their reaſons; they are weighed in the ballance, and found too light.

A Sirs! what God commands muſt bee put in ſpeedy execution without denying, or delaying, or diſputing the difficulties that attend it. Moſt Young men in theſe dayes do as the Heathens, when their Gods called for a man, they offered a Candle; or as *Hercules* offered up a painted man inſtead of a living. When God calls upon Young men to ſerve him with the Primroſe of their youth, they uſually put him off till

*Obedientia non diſcutit Dei mandata, ſed facit.* Proſper.

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands, and feeble knees, but this will be bitterneſs in the end, &c.

Young men muſt be really good betimes.

## Reaſon II.

*Becauſe they have means and opportunities of being good betimes.*

Never had men better means, and greater opportunities of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good, than now. Ah Lord! how knowing, how beleeving, how holy, how heavenly, how humble might young men bee, were they not wanting to their own ſouls? Young men might bee good, very good, yea, eminently good, would they but improve the means of grace, the tenders of mercy, and the knockings of Chriſt by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

*Eraſmus.* The Antients painted Opportunity with a hairy fore-head, but bald behinde, to ſignifie, that while a man hath Opportunity before him.

him, he may lay hold on it, but if he ſuffer it to ſlip away, he cannot pull it back again.

How many Young men are now in everlaſting chains, who would give ten thouſand Worlds, (had they ſo many in their hands to give) to enjoy but one opportunity, to hear one Sermon more, to make one Prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? this is their Hell, their Torment, this is the Scorpion that is ſtill biting, this is the Worm that is alwayes gnawing. Woe, woe, to us, that wee have neglected and trifled away thoſe golden opportunities that once wee had to get our ſins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our conſciences purged, and our ſouls ſaved, &c. * I have read of a King, who having no Iſſue to ſucceed him, eſpying one day a well-favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to inſtruct him, providing by his will, that if hee proved

* *Bellarm. In concione de cruciatibus Gehennæ.*

ed fit for government, hee ſhould bee crowned King, if not, hee ſhould bee bound in chains, and made a Gally-ſlave. Now when hee grew to years, the Kings executors perceiving that hee had ſadly neglected thoſe means and opportunities, whereby hee might have been fit for State-Government, called him before them, and declared the Kings will and pleaſure concerning him, which was accordingly performed, for they cauſed him to bee fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can expreſſe how much hee was affected and afflicted, with his ſad and miſerable ſtate, eſpecially when hee conſidered with himſelf, That now hee is chained, who might have walked at liberty; Now hee is a Slave, who might have been a King; Now hee is over-ruled by Turks, who might once have ruled over Chriſtians? The Application is eaſie.

Ah!

Ah! young men, young men, ſhall Satan take all opportunities to tempt you? Shall the World take all opportunities to allure you? ſhall wicked men take all opportunities to inſnare you, and to undo you? and ſhall Chriſtian friends take all opportunities to better you? and ſhall Gods faithfull Meſſengers take all opportunities to ſave you? and will you? *will you neglect ſo great ſalvation?* *Plutarch* writes of *Hannibal*, that when hee could have taken *Rome*, hee would not, and when hee would have taken *Rome*, hee could not. Many in their youthful dayes, when they might have Mercy, Chriſt, Pardon, Heaven, they will not, and in old age, when they would have Chriſt, Pardon, Peace, Heaven, they cannot, they may not. God ſeems to ſay, as *Theſius* ſaid once, Go, ſaies hee, and tell *Creon*, *Theſius* offers thee a gracious offer, Yet I am pleaſed to bee friends, if thou wilt ſubmit (this is my firſt meſ-

'T is ſtoried of *Charles*, King of *Sicily* and *Jeruſalem*, that hee was called *Carolus Cunctator*, *Charls* the lingerer; this age affords many ſuch lingerers, &c.

meſſage) but if this offer prevail not, look for mee to bee up in arms.

## Reaſon III.

Why young men ſhould bee really good betimes. Lord, ſaith *Auſtin*, I have loved thee late, the greater was his ſins, and the more were his ſorrows.

*Becauſe then they have fewer and leſſer ſins to anſwer for, and repent of, multitudes of ſins and ſorrows are prevented by being good betimes.*

The more wee number our daies, the fewer ſins wee ſhall have to number. As a Copy is then ſafeſt from blotting, when duſt is put upon it; ſo are wee from ſinning, when (in the time of our youth) wee remember that wee are but duſt. The tears of young penitents do more ſcorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blaſted, and the great underminer, countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, hee bids tarry, time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, hee bids Repent early, in the morning of thy youth; for then thy ſins will bee fewer,

fewer, and leſſer. Well, young men, remember this; He that will not at the firſt hand buy good counſel cheap, ſhall at the ſecond hand buy repentance over dear.

Ah! young men, young men, if you do not begin to bee good betimes, thoſe ſins that are now as Jewels ſparkling in your eyes, will at laſt bee Mill-ſtones about your necks, to ſink you for ever. — Among many things that *Beza* in his laſt Will and Teſtament, gave God thanks for, this was the firſt and chief, that hee at the age of ſixteen years, had called him to the knowledge of the truth, and ſo prevented many ſins and ſorrows, that otherwiſe would have overtaken him, and have made his life leſs happy, and more miſerable. Young Saints often prove old Angels, but old Sinners ſeldome prove good Saints, &c.

Pſal. 25.7. Job 13.26.

There is nothing puts a more ſerious frame into a mans ſpirit, than to know the worth of his time.

## Reaſon IV.

*Becauſe time is a precious Talent that*

Why young men ſhould bee really good betimes.

*that young men must bee countable for.*

The sooner they begin to bee good, the more easie will bee their accounts, especially as to that great Talent of time. *Cato* and other Heathens held, that account must be given, not only of our labour, but also of our leisure; at the great day it will appear, that they that have spent their time in mourning, have done better than they that have spent their time in dancing; and they that have spent many days in humiliation, than they that have spent many daies in idle recreations.

I have read of a devout Man, who when hee heard a Clock strike, hee would say, here is one hour more past that I have to answer for. Ah! young men, as time is very precious, so it is very short, time is very swift, it is suddenly gone, in the ninth of *Job*, and the 25th. *verse*. *My dayes are swifter than a Post, they flee away, they see no good.* The Hebrew word (*Kalal*) translated *swifter*

*than*

*than a post*, ſignifies any thing that is light; becauſe light things are quick in motion.

The Antients emblem'd time with wings, as it were, not running but flying. Time is like the Sun, that never ſtands ſtill, but is ſtill a running his race; the Sun did once ſtand ſtill, yea, went back, but ſo did never Time. Time is ſtill running and flying; it is a bubble, a ſhadow, a dream; can you ſeriouſly conſider of this, young men, and not *begin to bee good betimes*? Surely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon wee tread, were turned into a lump of Gold, it were not able to purchaſe one minute of time. Oh the regreetings of the Damned, for miſ-ſpending precious time! Oh what would they not give to bee free, and to enjoy the means of grace one hour! Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungring and thirſting would they hear the

*Sophocles. Phocilides.*

Who is there among us that knows how to valuetime, and prize a day at a due rate? *Sen. Epi.*

Word! Time (saith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in Hell, and the traffick of it most gainfull, where, for one day a man would give ten thousand worlds, if he had them; young men, can you in good earnest beleeve this, and not begin to be good betimes?

A Heathen said, He lived no day without a line, that is, he did something remarkable every day.

Ah! young men and women, as you love your precious immortal Souls, as you would escape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would bee happy in Life, and blessed in Death, and glorious after Death; don't spend any more of your precious time, in drinking and drabbing, in carding, dicing, and dancing; don't trifle away your time; don't Swear away your time; don't VVhore away your time; do not Lye away your time, but begin to bee good betimes, because Time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for: Ah! Young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when possibly you have not

not ſo many hours to make ready your accompts, it may bee this night you may have a ſummons, and then if your time be done, and your work to bee begun, in what a ſad caſe will you bee, will you not wiſh that you had never been born?

*Seneca* was wont to jeer the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they loſt one day in ſeven; meaning their Sabbath; O! that it were not too true of the moſt of profeſſors, both young and old, that they loſe not only one day in ſeven, but ſeveral daies in ſeven.

Sirs! Time let ſlip cannot bee recalled, the fooliſh Virgins found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Herod* found it ſo, and *Nero* found it ſo, the *Iſraelites* found it ſo, yea, and *Jacob*, and *Joſiah*, and *David*, (though good men) yet they found it ſo to their coſt. Mat. 25.5. Judg. 3.23. Heb. 3.17, 18, 19.

The *Ægyptians* draw the Picture of Time with three Heads, the firſt of a greedy VVolf, gapeing for time paſt, becauſe it hath

ravenously devoured the memory of so many things past recalling. The

Second of a Crowned Lion, roaring for time present, because it hath the principality of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a Deceitful Dog, fawning for time to come, because it feeds some men with many flattering hopes, to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, concerning this talent of time, with which God hath trusted you, *begin to bee good betimes*, &c.

Why young men should bee really good betimes. *Seneca* (though a Heathen) could say, beleiveme, true joy is no light thing.

## Reason V.

*Because they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to bee old.*

The 71. *Psalm.* 5. 17, 18. compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. O God thou hast taught mee from*

*from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works; Now alſo when I am old and gray-headed, O God forſake mee not, until I have ſhewed thy ſtrength unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come.*

*Polycarpus* could ſay, when old, Thus many years have I ſerved my Maſter Chriſt, and hitherto hath hee dealt well with mee; if early converts live to bee old, no joy to their joy, their joy will bee the greateſt joy, a joy like to the joy of Harveſt, a joy like to their joy that divide the ſpoil; their joy will bee the ſoundeſt joy, the weightieſt joy, the holieſt joy, the pureſt joy, the ſtrongeſt joy, and the moſt laſting joy; the Carnal joy of the wicked, the gliſtering (Golden) joy of the worldling, and the flaſhing joy of the Hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of ſuch, who when old, can ſay with good *Obadiah*, *that they feared the Lord*

Iſa. 9. 3.

*from their youth.* If when you are young, your eyes shall bee full of tears (for sin) when you are old, your heart shall bee full of joyes. Such shall have the best Wine at last.

Oh! *That young men would begin to be good betimes*, that so they may have the greater harvest of joy, when they come to bee old, &c. 'tis sad to bee sowing your seed, when you should bee reaping your harvest; 'tis best to gather in the Summer of youth, against the Winter of old age.

## Reason VI.

Why young men should bee really good betimes.

*Because an eternity of felicity and glory, hangs upon those few moments that are alloted to them.*

Luk. 10.25. It was a good question the young man proposed, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* I know I shall be eternally happy, or eternally miserable, eternally blest, or eternally curst, eternally saved, or eternally damned, &c.

*O what shall I do to inherit eternal life!* my cares, my fears, my troubles are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can expresse eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day, which shall never have end; what shall I do, what shall I not do, that I may be happy to all eternity?

I am now young, and in the flower of my daies; but who knows what a day may bring forth? the greatest weight hangs upon the smallest wyers, an eternity depends upon those few hours, I am to breathe in the world; O! what cause have I therefore to bee good betimes, to know God Betimes, to beleeve betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon sealed betimes, to get my nature changed, my Conscience purged, and my interest in Christ cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes mee, before my Glass bee out,

*Æternitas est semper & immutabile esse.* The old *Romans* were out, that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues, and in Marble Monuments

my Sunset, my Race run, lest the dark night of Eternity should overtake me, and I made miserable for ever.

I have read of one (*Myrogenes*) who when great gifts were sent unto him, hee sent them all back again, saying, I onely desire this one thing at your Masters hand; to pray for mee, that I may bee saved for eternity. O that all young men and women, who make Earth their Heaven, Pleasure their Paradise, that eat the fat, and drink the sweet, that cloathe themselves richly, and crown their heads with Rose-buds, that they would seriously consider of Eternity, so as to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity! That they may say with that famous Painter *Zeuxes* (*Æternitati pingo*) I paint for eternity; we do all for eternity, we beleeve for eternity, wee repent for eternity, wee obey for eternity, &c.

Luk. 15. 19, 20.

Oh that you would not make those

thoſe things eternal for puniſhment, that cannot bee eternal for uſe.

*Cur ea quæ ad uſum diuturna eſſe non poſſunt, ad ſupplicium diuturna deposcet? Ambroſe in Luk. 4. T. 5.*

Ah! young men and women, God calls, and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt calls, and the Spirit of Chriſt in the Goſpel calls, and the rage of Satan calls, and your ſad ſtate and condition calls, and the happineſſe and bleſſednеſſe of glorified Saints calls; theſe all call aloud upon you to make ſure a glorious eternity, before you ſail out into that dreadful Ocean. All your eternal good depends upon the ſhort and uncertain moments of your Lives; and if the Threed of your Lives ſhould bee cut, before a happy eternity is made ſure, woe to you that ever you were born; Doe not ſay, O young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will bee time enough to provide for eternity, for eternity may bee at the door, ready to carry thee away for ever. Every daies experience ſpeaks out eternity to bee as neer the young mans back,

as

as 'tis before the Old mans face.

O graſpe to day the Diadem of a bleſſed eternity, leſt thou art cut off before the morning comes! though there is but one way to come into this World, yet there is a thouſand thouſand wayes to bee ſent out of this world; Well young men and women, remember this, as the motions of the ſoul are quick, ſo are the motions of Divine Juſtice quick alſo; and if you will not hear the voice of God to day, if you will not provide for eternity to day, God may ſwear to morrow that you ſhall never enter into his reſt; it is a very ſad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his VVord, his offers, our own ſouls and eternity: Therefore let all young people labour to bee good betimes, and not to let him, that is goodneſs it ſelf, alone, till hee hath made them good, till hee hath given them thoſe hopes of eternity that will both make them good, and keep them

Heb. 3. 7, 8 15, 16, 18, 19.

good, that will make them happy, and keep them happy: and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know, that ere long those fears of eternity, of misery, that beget that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa's* head, astonisheth with it's very aspect, and stranges hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro, Spero*, so it may be inverted: *Dum Spero, Spiro*, other miseries may wound the spirit, but Despair kills it dead; my prayers shall bee, that none of you may ever experience this sad truth; but that you may all bee good in good earnest betimes, which will yeeld you two Heavens, a Heaven on Earth, and a Heaven after Death.

## Reason VII.

*Because they do not begin to live, till they begin to be really good.*

Why young persons should be really good betimes.

Till they begin to be good, they are

are dead God-wards and Christ-wards, and Heaven-wards, and Holinesse-wards; till a man begins to bee really good, hee is really dead, *Philippians* 2. 1. and that,

*Respectu operis.* First in respect of working, his works are called dead works, *Heb.* 9. 14. the most glistering services of unregenerate persons, are but dead works, because they proceed not from a principle of life, and they lead to death, *Rom.* 6. 21. and leave a sentence of death upon the soul, till it be washed off by the blood of the Lamb.

*Respectu honoris.* Secondly, He is dead, in respect of honour, hee is dead to all priviledges, hee is not fit to inherit mercy; Who will set the Crown of Life upon a dead man? The Crown of Life is onely for living Christians, *Revelations* 2. 10. The young Prodigal was dead till hee begun to bee good, till hee begun to remember his Fathers house, and to resolve to return home. Luk. 15. 24 *My Sonne was dead, but is*

*alive*

*alive*, and the Widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while shee liveth.

1 Tim. 5. 6. As it is a reproach to an old man to bee in Coats, so tis a disgrace to be an old babe, i.e. to be but a babe in grace, when old in years. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.

When *Josaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old hee was? hee answered, five and forty years old, to whom *Josaphat* replyed, thou seemest to bee seventy, true saith hee, if you reckon ever since I was born; but I count not those years which were spent in vanity.

Ah Sirs! you never begin to live, till you begin to bee good in good earnest. There is the life of Vegetation, and that is the life of plants: Secondly, there is the life of Sense, and that is the life of beasts; Thirdly, there is the life of Reason, and that is the life of man; Fourthly, there is the life of Grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not begin to live, till you begin to bee good: If a living Dogge is better than a dead Lion, as the Wise man speaks, and if a Fly is more excellent than the Heavens, because the Fly hath

Eccle. 9. 4.

hath life, which the Heavens have not, as the Philosopher saith; what a sad, dead, poor nothing is that person, that is a stranger to the life of grace and goodness, that is dead even whilest he is alive?

Most men will bleed, sweat, vomit, purge, part with an estate, yea with a limb, limbs, yea, and many a better thing, (*viz.* the honour of God, and a good conscience) to preserve their natural lives: as hee cries out, Give mee any deformity, any torment, any misery, so you spare my life; and yet how few, how very few are to bee found, who make it their work, their businesse, to attain to a life of goodness, or to begin to bee good betimes, or to bee dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to bee dead to God, and alive to the world? this is for a lamentation, and shall bee for a lamentation, that natural life is so highly prized, and spiritual life so little regarded, &c.

*Mæcenas* in *Seneca* had rather live in many diseases, than dye. And *Homer* reporteth of his *Achilles*, that he had rather be a servant to a poor Country Clown here, than to bee a King to all the souls departed.

Reason

## Reason VIII.

*Because the promise of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early seeking of God.*

Why young persons should bee really good betimes.

Prov. 8. 17. *I love them that love mee, and they that seek mee early, shall finde mee.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that seek mee in the morning, shall finde mee. By the benefit of the morning light wee come to finde the things wee seek. *Shahhar* signifies to seek inquisitively, to seek diligently, to seek timely in the morning. As the *Israelites* went early in the morning to seek for Manna. And as Students rise early in the morning, and sit close to it, to get knowledge; so saith Wisdome, *They that seek me in the spring and morning of their youth, shall finde mee.*

שחר

Exo. 16. 21

*Scipio* went first to the Capitol, and then to the Senate. *Tully*, an Heathen, frequently called God *Optimum maximum*, the best and greatest. God is *omnis super omnia.*

*Now to seek the Lord early*, is to seek the Lord firstly. God hath in himself all the good of Angels, of men, and universal nature; hee hath all glories, all dignities, all riches, all treasures, all

all pleasures, all comforts, all delights, all joyes, all beatitudes. God is that one infinite perfection in himself, which is eminently and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therefore he is firstly to be sought. Abstracts do better express him, than Concretes and Adjectives; he is, being, bonity, power, wisdome, justice, mercy, goodness, and love it self, and therefore worthy to bee sought before all other things. Seek yee first the good things of the minde, saith *Philosophy*, and doth not Divinity say as much?

*Cicero.*

Again, To seek early, is to seek opportunely, to seek while the opportunity does present, *Judg.9. 33. Thou shalt rise early, and set upon the City*, that is, thou shalt opportunely set upon the City.

Daies of grace have their dates therefore take heed of saying, *Cras, Cras*, to morrow to morrow.

Such there have been, who by giving a glasse of Water opportunely, have obtained a Kingdome, as you may see in the story of *Thamastus*, and King *Agrippa*.

Ah!

Ah! Young Men and Women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune ſeeking of God, you may obtain a Kingdome that ſhakes not, and Glory that paſſeth not away. Heb. 12, 28

There is a ſeaſon wherein God may bee found, *Seek yee the Lord while hee may bee found, call yee upon him while hee is neer*; and if you ſlip this ſeaſon, you may ſeek him, and miſs him. Isa. 55. 6. *Though they cry unto mee, I will not hearken unto them, when yee make many Prayers, I will not hear. Then ſhall they cry unto the Lord, but hee will not hear. Then ſhall they call upon mee, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek mee early: but ſhall not finde mee.* Jer. 11. 11. Isa. 1. 15. Mic. 3. 4. Prov. 1. 28 This was *Sauls* miſery; *The Philiſtines are upon mee, and God will not anſwer mee*; 'tis juſtice that they ſhould ſeek, and not finde at laſt, who might have found, had they but ſought ſeaſonably and opportunely; &c.

Again, to seek early, is to seek earnestly, affectionately. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within mee, will I seek thee early:* The Hebrew word signifies both an earnest, and an early seeking; in the morning, the spirits are up, and men are earnest, lively, and affectionate.

Isa. 26. 9.

Ah! such a seeking shall certainly bee crowned with finding: *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct* (Hebrew, martial) *my prayer unto thee, and will look up*, (Hebrew, look out like a watch-man) *Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoyce, let them ever shout for joy; because thou defendest them*, (Hebrew, thou covereſt over, or protectest them) *Let them also that love thy Name, bee joyful in thee: for thou, Lord, wilt blesse the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compasse him* (Hebrew crown him) *as with a Shield.* None have ever thus sought the Lord, but they have, or certainly shall finde

Psal. 5. 3, 11, 12. אערך ואצפה

finde him. *Seek and yee ſhall finde*, Matth. 7. 7. *Your hearts ſhall live that ſeek God*, Pſalme 69. 32. *The effectual fervent prayer of a Righteous man availeth much*, James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, *The working prayer of a Righteous man availed much*; that prayer that ſets the whole man a work, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earneſt prayer, like *Sauls* ſword, and *Jonathans* bow, never returns empty.

ἐνεργούμενη. It ſignifies ſuch a working as notes the livelieſt activity that can bee.

One ſpeaking of *Luther*, who was a man very earneſt in Prayer, ſaid, *(hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit)* this man could have what hee would of God, &c.

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what wee firſt ſeek, wee ſeek as chief. Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek him primarily, chiefly, in the 63 *Pſalme*, and the 1 *verſe*, *Thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee*, that is, I will ſeek thee, as my choiceſt, and

*Omne bonum in ſumma bono.*

my chiefeſt good. God is *Alpha*, the fountain from whence all grace ſprings; and *Omega*, the Sea to which all glory runs, and therefore early and primarily to bee ſought. God is a perfect good, a ſolid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur, cui nil accedere, ſolidum, cui nil decedere poteſt. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good, to which nothing can bee added, that a ſolid, from which nothing can bee ſpared; ſuch a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to bee ſought. God is a pure and ſimple good, hee is a light, in whom there is no darkneſſe, a good in whom there is no evil. The goodneſſe of the Creature is mixt, yea, that little goodneſſe that is in the Creature, is mixt with much evil, but God is an immixt good, hee is a good, hee is a pure good, hee is all over good, hee is nothing but good. God is an All-ſufficient good, *walk before mee, and bee upright, I am God All-ſufficient*, in the 17. of *Geneſis*, and the 1 verſe. *Habit omnia, qui habet*

1 Joh. 1. 5.

*Quicquid eſt in Deo, eſt ipſe Deus.*

*habet habentem omnia. Aug.* Hee hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himself all power to defend you, all wisdome to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to inrich you, all righteousnesse to cloathe you, all goodnesse to supply you, and all happinesse to Crown you. God is a satisfying good, a good that fills the heart, and quiets the soul, in the 33. of *Genesis*, and the 11. *verse*. *I have enough*, saith good *Jacob*, *I have all*, saith *Jacob*, for so the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, &c. In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him, I seek no other reward, for *hee is the universal reward*, saith one. As the worth and value of many peeces of Silver is to bee found in one peece of Gold. So all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the creatures, are to bee found in God, yea, all the Cant. 2. 3.

whole Volume of Perfections, which is ſpread through Heaven and Earth, is epitomized in him. No good, below him that is the greateſt good, can ſatisfie the ſoul; a good wife, a good childe, a good name, a good eſtate, a good friend, cannot ſatisfie the ſoul; theſe may pleaſe, but they cannot ſatisfie. All abundance, if it bee not my God, is to mee nothing but poverty and want, ſaid one.

*Omnis copia quæ non eſt Deus meus, mihi egeſtas eſt.* Aug. Soliloq. c. 13.

Ah! that young men and women would but in the morning of their youth, ſeek, yea, ſeek early, ſeek earneſtly, ſeek affectionately, ſeek diligently, ſeek primarily, and ſeek unweariedly this God, who is the greateſt good, the beſt good, the moſt deſirable good; who is a ſuitable good, a pure good, a ſatisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good.

Why young perſons ſhould bee really good betimes.

## Reaſon IX.

*Becauſe the time of youth is the choiceſt and fitteſt time for ſervice.*

Now

Now your parts are lively, ſenſes freſh, memory ſtrong, and nature vigorous, the daies of your youth, are the ſpring and morning of your time, they are the firſt-born of your ſtrength, therefore God requires your non-age, as well as your dotage, the Wine of your times, as well as the Lees, as you may ſee typified to you in the firſt fruits, which were dedicated to the Lord, and the firſt-born. The time of youth, is the time of ſalvation, it is the acceptable time, it is thy ſummer, thy harveſt time. O young man! therefore do not ſleep, but up and bee doing, awaken thy heart, rouſe up thy ſoul, and improve all thou haſt, put out thy reaſon, thy ſtrength, thy all, to the treaſuring up of heavenly graces, precious promiſes, divine experiences, and ſpiritual comforts, againſt the Winter of old age; and then old age will not bee to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham*, *a good old age*; do not put off God with

The daies of youth are called, *ætas bona*, *in Cicero*, and *ætas optima*, *in Seneca*.

Exod. 13. 2.

Exod. 22. 9.

Gen. 25. 28.

fair promiſes and large pretences, till your laſt ſands are running, and the daies of dotage have overtaken you. That's a ſad word of the Prophet, *Curſed bee the deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

Mal. 1. 14.

Ah! young men and women, who are like the Almond Tree, you have many Males in the Flock, your ſtrength is a Male in your Flock, your time is a Male in the Flock, your reaſon is a Male in the Flock, your parts are a Male in the Flock, and your gifts are a Male in the Flock; now if hee be curſt that hath but one Male in his Flock, and ſhall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value, how will you bee curſt, and curſt? curſt at home, and curſt abroad, curſt Temporally, curſt Spiritually, and curſt Eternally, who have many Males in your Flock, and yet deal ſo unworthily, ſo fraudulently, and falſe-heartedly with God, as to put him off with the dreggs of your

Jer. 1. 11. The Almond tree bloſſomes in *January* (while it is yet winter) and the fruit is ripe in *March*.

your time and ſtrength, while you ſpend the Primroſe of your Youth in the ſervice of the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil.

The Fig-tree in the Goſpel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and ſeaſonably, was curſt to admiration; the time of youth is the time and ſeaſon for bringing forth the fruits of Righteouſneſſe and Holineſſe, and if theſe fruits bee not brought forth in their ſeaſon, you may juſtly fear, that the curſes of Heaven will ſecretly and inſenſibly ſoak and ſink into your ſouls, and then woe, woe to you, that ever you were born; the beſt way to prevent this Hell of Hells, is to give God the cream and flower of your Youth, your ſtrength, your time, your talents; veſſels that are betimes ſeaſoned with the ſavour of life, never loſe it, *Prov.* 22. 6.

Mat. 21. 20.

Why young perſons ſhould bee really good (in good earneſt) betimes.

## Reaſon X.

*Becauſe death may ſuddenly and unexpectedly*

*expectedly seize upon you, you have no sense of your lives.*

*Pares nascuntur, pares moriuntur*, in the womb and in the tomb they are all alike. Job 21.23, 24. 'Tis an allegorical description of the highest prosperity.

Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may finde Graves enough of his length in burial places; as green Wood, and old Loggs meet in one fire, so young sinners and old sinners meet (in one Hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his spring and prime, then he is cut off, and dies; one dyeth in his full strength (or in the strength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moystened with marrow. *Davids* children died when young, so did *Jobs*, and *Jeroboams*, &c. Every daies experience tells us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet, who brings in a proper Young man, rich and potent, discoursing with Death in the habit of a Mower, with his Sythe in his hand,

hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all flesh is grass*, Isa. 40. 6.) and wilt thou not spare any mans person, saith the young man? I spare none, saith Death, mans life is but a day, a short day, a winters day, oft-times the Sun goes down upon a man, before it be well up; your day is short, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you should rise early, and set forwards towards Heven betimes, as that man doth that hath a long journey to go in a winters day.

Deaths motto is, *Nulli cedo*, I yeeld to none.

The life of man is absolutely short. *Behold, thou hast made my daies as an hands breadth.* The life of man is comparatively short, and that if you compare mans life now to what hee might have reacht, had hee continued in innocency. Sin brought in Death, Death is a fall: that came in by a fall; or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then several lived, six, seven, eight, nine hundred

Psal. 39. 5.

Gen. 9.

dred years; or if you compare mens daies with the daies of God, Psal. 39. 5. *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the dayes of man, to the daies of Eternity.

The Heathen could say, that the whole life of man should bee nothing else but (*Meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death.

Ah! Young men, Young men, can you seriously consider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of grace, your precious Souls, and eternity, &c? surely you cannot, surely you dare not; if you do but in good earnest ponder upon the shortnesse of mans life. It is recorded of *Phillip* King of *Macedon*, that hee gave a pension to one, to come to him every day at dinner, and to cry to him (*Memento te esse mortalem*) remember thou art but mortal.

Ah! Young men and Old had need bee often put in minde of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that Day, yea, to put farre from them the thoughts of that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bitter

ter word, death, mentioned in their ears, and ſurely this age is full of ſuch monſters.

And as the life of man is very ſhort, ſo it is very uncertain, now well, now ſick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not alwaies give warning before hand, ſometimes hee gives the mortal blow ſuddenly, hee comes behinde with his dart, and ſtrikes a man at the heart, before hee ſaith, *Have I found thee, O mine Enemy? Antichus* fell down dead ſuddenly, *Acts* 20. 19. Death ſuddenly arreſted *David*'s Sons, and *Job*'s Sons, *Auguſtus* died in a Complement, *Galba*, with a Sentence, *Veſpatian*, with a Jeſt, *Zeuxes* died laughing at the picture of an old Woman, which hee drew with his own hand, *Sophocles* was choaked with the ſtone in a Grape, *Diodorus* the Logician died for ſhame, that hee could not anſwer a joculary queſtion propounded at the Table by *Stilpo*, *Joannes Meaſius*, preaching upon the raiſing of the woman of

*Petrarch* telleth of one who being invited to dinner the next day, anſwered, *Ego à multis annis craſtinum non habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

of *Naims* Sonne from the dead, within three hours after died himself.

Ah! Young men and women, have you not cause, great cause to bee good betimes? for Death is sudden in his approaches, nothing more sure than death, and nothing more uncertain than life! therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your sins betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never say, as *Cæsar Borgias* said, when hee was sick to death, When I lived (said hee) I provided for every thing but Death, now I must dye, and am unproved to dye, &c.

## Reason XI.

Why young persons should bee really good betimes.

*Because it is ten to one, nay, a hundred to one if ever they are converted, if they are not converted when they are young.*

God

God usually begins with such betimes, that hee hath had thoughts of love and mercy towards them from everlasting: the instances cited to prove the Doctrine, confirms this Argument, and if you look abroad in the world, you shall hardly finde one Saint among a thousand, but dates his conversion from the time of his Youth. 'Twas the Young ones that got through the Wilderneſſe into *Canaan*. If the Tree do not bud, and blossome, and bring forth fruit in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after; if in the spring, and morning of your daies, you do not bring forth fruit to God, it is an hundred to one, that ever you bring forth fruit to him, when the evil daies of old age shall overtake you, wherein you shall say, you have no pleasure. For as the Sonne of *Syrach* observes, if thou hast gathered nothing in thy Youth, what canst thou finde in thy age? 'tis rare, very rare, that God sows and reaps in

Hos. 11.1. When *Israel* was a childe, then I loved him, &c.

Num. 26. 64. And Hebrew Doctor observes, that of those six hundred thousand that went out of *Egypt*, there were but two persons that entered *Canaan*. Eccl. 25.5.

in old age, usually God sows the seed of grace in youth, that yeelds the harvest of joy in age.

Though true Repentance bee never too late, yet late Repentance is seldome true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleased themselves with the thoughts of after Repentance. The Lord hath made a promise to late repentance, but where hath he made a promise of late Repentance. Yea, what can bee more just and equal, that such should seek, and not finde, who might have found, but would not seek; and that hee should shut his ears against their late prayers, who have stopt their ears against his early Calls? The Ancient Warriours would not accept an old man into their Army, as being unfit for service, and do'st thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath suck't out all the Marrow? What Lord, what Master, will take such into their service, who have all their daies served their enemies?

Prov. 1. 24–32.

enemies? and will God, will God? The *Circaſſians* (a kinde of Mongrel Chriſtians) are ſaid to divide their life betwixt ſin and devotion, dedicating their youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this bee thy caſe, I would not bee in thy caſe for ten thouſand worlds. *Breerw. Enqui.*

I have read of a certain great man, that was admoniſhed in his ſickneſſe to repent, who anſwered, that hee would not repent yet, for if hee ſhould recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing ſicker and ſicker, his friends preſſed him again to repent, but then hee told them, that it was too late (*Quia jam judicatus ſum, & condemnatus*) for now, ſaid hee, I am judged and condemned. *Beda* hath this ſtory

## Reaſon XII.

*Becauſe elſe they will never attain to the honour of being Old Diſciples.* Why young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

## CHAP. II.

### *It is a very great honour to bee an Old Disciple.*

NOw this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring and morning of their Youth: It is no honour for an old man to bee in coats, nor for an old man to bee a babe in grace. An A. B. C. old man, is a sad and shameful sight: O but it is a mighty honour to bee a man when hee is old, that hee can date his conversion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to bee an Old Disciple, I shall prove by an induction of Particulars. As

What more ridiculous than (*puer centum annorum*) a childe of an hundred years old?

#### Particular I.

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

*All men will honour an Old Disciple.* Prov. 16. 31. *The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it bee found in the way of Righteousnesse.* God requires that the aged should bee honoured

noured, *Lev.* 19.32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man;* (the old man here is by some expounded the wise man) *and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* Hoarinesse is only honourable, when found in a way of righteousnesse; a white head accompanied with a holy heart, makes a man truely honourable. There are two glorious sights in the world, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightnesse; and the other is, an old man walking in waies of righteousnesse; twas *Abrahams* honour, that hee went to his grave in a good old age; or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there bee that go to their graves with a gray head; but this was *Abrahams* Crown, that hee went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abraham's* head been never so gray, if it had not been good, it would have been no honour to him; a Hoary head, when coupled with an unsanctified heart, is rather a curse, than a blessing.

Gen. 25.8.

Isa. 65. 20. sing, when the head is as white as Snow, and the soul as black as hell; God usually gives up such to the greatest scorn and contempt. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.*

Lam. 5. 12.

Deut. 28. 49, 50.

I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself, *Ariston* wondring thereat, asked him, whom chidest thou? *Cleanthes* laughed, and answered, I chide an old fellow (*qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding, and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world, but their hoary heads, and snowy beards.

Parti-

## Particular II.

*God usually reveals himself most to old Disciples, to old Saints*, Job 12. 12. *With the Antient is wisdome, and in length of daies understanding.* God usually manifests most of himself to aged Saints, they usually pray most, and pay most, they labour most, and long most after the choicest manifestations of himself, and of his grace; and therefore hee opens his bosome most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet-Council, *Gen.* 18. 17, 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do, for I know him, that hee will command his Children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement, that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham, *that which hee hath spoken of him. Abraham* was an old friend; and therefore God makes him both of his Court and Council; wee usually open our hearts most freely, fully, and familiarly,

בישישים In the antient is wisdome. *Valentinianus* the Emperours motto was (*amicus veterimus optimus*) an old friend is best.

to old friends. So doth God to his antient friends. Ah what a bleſſed ſight and enjoyment of Chriſt had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him! *Now Lord, letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy Word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation, &c.* I have ſeen him, who is my light, my life, my love, my joy, my crown, my heaven, my all; therefore now let *thy Servant depart in peace.* So *Anna*, when ſhee was fourſcore and four years old, was ſo filled with the diſcoveries and injoyments of Chriſt, that ſhe could not but declare what ſhee had taſted, felt, ſeen, heard, and received from the Lord: Shee was ripe, and ready to diſcover the fulneſſe, ſweetneſſe, goodneſſe, excellency, and glory of that Chriſt, whom ſhee had long loved, feared, and ſerved. So *Paul* lived in the light, ſight, and ſweet enjoyments of Chriſt, when aged, in years, in grace. So, when had *John* that glorious viſion of Chriſt among

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Verſe 36, 37, 38.

Phil. 4. 5. 7, 9.

Rev. 1. 7. --ult.

the

the golden Candlesticks, and those discoveries and manifestations of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichrist, the casting the beast, and false Prophet into a lake of fire, the conquest of the Kingdomes of the world, by Christs bow and sword, the binding up of Satan, and the new *Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, but when hee was old, when he was aged in years and in grace? The Lord speaks many a secret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Christians, which young Christians are not acquainted with, as that phrase imports, a *Sam*, 7.27. *Thou O Lord God of Hosts hast revealed to thy Servant*, so you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord thou hast revealed this to the ear of thy Servant. Some wonder how that word to the ear come to bee left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphasis lies; wee will tell many things in an old friends ear, which wee will not acquaint young ones with. So doth God many times whisper

גליתה אתאזן

Galitha ethozen.

whiſper an old Diſciple in the ear, and acquaints him with ſuch things that he hides from thoſe that are of younger years. And by this you may ſee what an honour it is to bee an old Diſciple.

Heb 5. 11, 12, 13, 14 Yet as *Solon* was not aſhamed to ſay that in his old age he was a learner, ſo thoſe that are the greateſt Artiſts in Chriſtianity, will confeſs, that they are ſtill but learners.

Particular III.

*An Old Diſciple, an Old Chriſtian, hee hath got the art of ſerving God, the art of Religion, got the art of hearing, the art of praying, the art of meditating, the art of repenting. the art of beleeving, the art of denying his natural ſelf, his ſinful ſelf, his Religious ſelf.*

All Trades have their myſtery and difficulty; ſo hath the Trade of Chriſtianity; young Chriſtians uſually bungle in religious works, but old Chriſtians acquit themſelves like work-men that need not bee aſhamed. A young Carpenter gives more blows, and makes more chips, but an old Artiſt doth the moſt, and beſt work; a young Chriſtian may make moſt noiſe in religious duties, but an old Chriſtian

stian makes the best work. A young Musician may play more quick and nimble upon an instrument, than an old, but an old Musitian hath more skill and judgement than a young: the application is easie; and by this you may also see, what an honour it is to be an old Christian, &c.

## Particular IV.

*An Old Disciple, an Old Christian, is rich in spiritual experiences.* O the experiences that hee hath of the wayes of God, of the workings of God, of the Word of God, of the Love of God! O the Divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the Word, of the sweetnes of the Word, of the usefulnesse of the Word! as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spur to quicken the soul, as an Anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that hee can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the Blood of Christ, the Offices

1 Joh. 2. 1.

Psa. 119. 49, 50.

Old men love to speak of antient things.

Offices of Chriſt, the merits of Chriſt, the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, the graces of Chriſt, and the influence of Chriſt. O the ſtories that an old Diſciple can tell you, of the in-dwellings of the ſpirit, of the operations of the ſpirit, of the teachings of the ſpirit, of the leadings of the ſpirit, of the ſealings of the ſpirit, of the witneſſings of the ſpirit, and of the comforts and joyes of the ſpirit! O the ſtories that an old Chriſtian can tell you, of the evil of ſin, the bitterneſſe of ſin, the deceitfulneſſe of ſin, the prevalency of ſin, and the happineſs of the conqueſt over ſin! O the ſtories that hee can tell you, of the ſnares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulneſs of Satan, and the waies of triumphing over Satan! As an old Souldier can tell you, of many battails, many ſcarres, many wounds, many loſſes, and many victories, even to admiration: So an old Saint is able to tell you ma-

ny

ny divine stories, even to admiration.

*Pliny* writes of the Crocodile, that shee grows to her last day: So aged Saints, they grow rich in spiritual experiences to the last. An old Christian being once asked, if hee grew in goodnesse, answered, yea, doubtless I do, for God hath said, *The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never loseth his leaf, or fruit, saith *Pliny*) *hee shall grow like a Cedar in* Lebanon. *Those that bee planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God; They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall bee fat and flourishing.*

Hos. 14.5, 6, 7.

Psa. 92. 12, 13, 14.

A fellow to this promise *Isaiah* mentions, *Hearken unto mee, O house of* Jacob, *and all the remnant of the house of* Israel, *which are born by me, from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age; I am hee, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.*

Isa. 46.3, 4

There

There is nothing more commendable in fulneſſe of age, than fulneſſe of knowledge and experience, nor nothing more honourable, than to ſee Antient Chriſtians very much acquainted with the Antient of daies.

Dan. 7. 9, 13, 22.

It is a brave ſight to ſee antient Chriſtians, like the Almond-tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flouriſh, and is full of bloſſomes in the Winter of old age, for as *Pliny* tells us, the Almond-tree doth bloſſome in the month of *January*. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions and impreſſions; a ſanctified heart is better than a ſilver tongue; no man ſo rich, ſo honourable, ſo happy, as the Old Diſciple, that is rich in ſpiritual experiences; and yet there is no Chriſtian ſo rich in his experiences, but hee would bee richer.

The Lawyer.

As *Julianus* ſaid, that when hee had one foot in the Grave, hee would have the other in the School: So though an Old Diſciple hath one foot in the Grave, yet hee will have

have the other in Christs School, that hee may still bee treasuring up more and more Divine experiments; and by this also you see, *What an honour it is to bee an old Disciple, &c.*

## Particular V.

*An Old Disciple is very stout, courragious, firm, and fixt in his resolution.*

An Old Christian is like a Pillar, a Rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him, what is suckt in in youth, will abide in old age; Old Souldiers are stout and couragious, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how courageous and resolute was hee! *And if it seem evil unto you, to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the Gods of the* Amorites, *in whose land yee dwell: but as for mee and my house, wee will serve the*

Psal. 44. 9, ult.

Josh. 24. 15, 29.

*the Lord. And it came to pass, after these things, that* Joshuah *the Son of* Nun, *the Servant of the Lord dyed, being an hundred and ten years old.*

*Considius*, a Senator of *Rome*, told *Cæsar* boldly, that the Senators durst not come to counsel for fear of his Souldiers; hee replied, why then dost thou go to the Senate; hee answered, because my age takes away my fear.

Ah! none so couragious, none so divinely fearless, none so careless in evil daies, as antient Christians. An old Christian knows, that that good will do him no good, which is not made good by perseverance; his resolution is like that of *Gonsalvo*, who protested to his Souldiers, shewing them *Naples*, that hee had rather dye one foot forwards, than to have his life secured for long, by one foot of retreat. Shall such a man as I am flee, said undaunted *Nehemiah*? hee will courragiously venture life and limb, rather than by one foot of retreat,

Neh. 6. 11.

dis-

discredit profession with the reproach of fearfulnesse. It was a brave magnanimous speech of *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates; Come (saith he) let us sing the forty sixth *Psalm*, and then let them do their worst.

When *Polycarpus* was fourscore and six years old, hee suffered Martyrdome couragiously, resolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the Antient Martyrs was very much threatned by his persecutors, hee replied, there is nothing of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my profession of the name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will.

Old Disciples, old Souldiers of Christ, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *Davids* worthies, who stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled. The Hebrews call a young man *Nag-*

*Aristotle*, (though a Heathen) could say, that in some cases a man had better lose his life, than bee cowardly, *Arist. Ethic.* 3. c. 1.

2 Sam. 23. 11, 12.

*Nagnar*, which springs from a root that signifies to shake off, or to bee tossed to and fro, to note how fickle, and how constant in inconstancy young men are, they usually are persons, either of no resolution for good, or of weak resolution; they are too often won with a Nut, and lost with an Apple; but now, aged Christians, in all Earthquakes they stand fast, like *Mount Zion*, that cannot bee removed. And by this also you may see, *what an honour it is to be an old Disciple*, an old Christian.

Mat. 19. 20, 21, 22.

## Particular VI.

*An Old Disciple, an Old Christian is prepared for death, he hath been long a dying to sin, to the world, to friends, to self, to relations, to all, and no man so prepared to dye, as hee that thus dayly dyes.*

Rom. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 24. ch. 6. 14.

An Old Disciple hath lived sincerely to Christ, hee hath lived eminently to Christ, hee hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Christ, hee hath lived exemplarily to Christ, hee hath lived

Rom. 14. 7, 8. Phil. 2. 21, 22, 23.

ed long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to dye, and bee with Christ. An old Disciple hath a Crown in his eye, a Pardon in his bosome, and a Christ in his arms; and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace.* As *Hillary* said to his soul, Soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years, and art thou afraid of death? go out soul, go out.

Many a day, said old *Cowper*, have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust, or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrours, devour mee, devour mee. And *Austine*, when old, could say, shall I dye ever? yes, or shall I dye at all? yes, why then Lord, if ever, why not now? why not now? so when *Modestus*, the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Basil*, hee answered, if that bee all, I fear not; yea, your Master cannot more pleasure mee, than

*Zeno*, a wise Heathen, said, I have no fear, but of old age.

*Cyprian* could receive the cruellest sentence of death with a *Deo gratias.* God I thank thee.

in ſending mee unto my heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I deſire to haſten.

It was the ſaying of an Antient Miniſter, a little before his death, I cannot ſay, I have ſo lived, that I ſhould now be afraid to dye, but this I can ſay, I have ſo learned Chriſt, that I am not afraid to dye. Old Chriſtians have made no more to dye, than to dine. It is nothing to dye, when the Comforter ſtands by. Old Diſciples know, that to dye, is but to lye down in their beds, they know that their dying day is better than their birth day; and this made *Salomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his diſſolution, before the day of his coronation.

Iſa. 57. 1, 2

Eccleſ. 7. 1

The Ancients were wont to call the dayes of their death, *Natalia*, not dying daies, but birth daies.

The Jews to this day ſtick not to call their *Golgotha*'s, *Batta Caiim*, the houſes or places of the Living; Old Chriſtians know, that

that Death is but an entrance into life, 'tis but a passeover, a *Jubile*, 'tis but the Lords Gentleman-usher to conduct them to Heaven; and this prepares them to dye, and makes death more desirable than life, and by this you may see, *that it is an honour to bee an Old Disciple.*

## Particular VII.

*An Old Disciple, an Old Christian, shall have a great reward in Heaven.*

1 Cor. 15. ult.
2 Cor. 9. 6.
Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12.
God will reward his servants, *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum proventum*, according to the successe of their labour.

Old Christians have done much, and suffered much for Christ; and the more any man doth or suffers for Christ here, the more glory hee shall have hereafter. 'Twas the saying of an Old Disciple upon his dying bed, Hee is come, Hee is come (meaning the Lord) with a great reward for a little work. *Agrippa* having suffered imprisonment for wishing *Caius* Emperour; the first thing *Caius* did, when hee came to the Empire, was to prefer *Agrippa* to a Kingdome,

hee gave him also a chain of Gold, as heavy as the chain of Iron that was upon him in prison; And will not Christ richly reward all his suffering Saints? Surely hee will: Christ will at last pay a Christian for every prayer hee hath made, for every Sermon hee hath heard, for every tear hee hath shed, for every morsel hee hath given, for every burden hee hath born, for every battel hee hath fought, for every enemy hee hath slain, and for every temptation that hee hath overcome.

*Cyrus* in a great expedition against his enemies, the better to incourage his souldiers to fight, in an Oration that hee made at the head of his Army, promised upon the victory, to make every Foot-souldier a Horseman, and every Horseman a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, should bee unrewarded; but what are *Cyrus* his rewards, to the rewards that Christ our General, promises to his? *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that overcometh*

Mat. 19. 28.
Luk. 22. 30
Mat. 5. 12.

*vercometh, will I grant to sit with mee in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne.* As there is no Lord to Christ, so there is no rewards to Christs, his rewards are the greatest rewards, hee gives Kingdomes, Crowns, Thrones, hee gives Grace and Glory, *Psalm* 48. 11.

As the King in *Plutarch* said of a groat, it is no Kingly gift, and of a Talent, it is no base bribe.

It is said of *Araunah*, that noble *Jebusite*, renowned for his bounty, that hee had but a Subjects purse, but a Kings heart: but Jesus Christ hath a Kings purse, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly hee gives.

And as Christs rewards are the greatest rewards, so his rewards are the surest rewards; hee is faithful that hath promised, 1 *Thes.* 5. 24.

*Antiochus* promised often, but seldome gave (upon which he was called in way of derision, a great promiser) but Jesus Christ never made any promise, but hee hath or will perform it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. nay hee is often better than his word,

1 Cor. 2. 9. hee gives many times more than we ask. The ſick man of the Palſie asked but health, and Chriſt gave him health, and a pardon to boot. *Salomon* deſired but wiſdome, and the Lord gave him wiſdome, and honour, and riches, and the favour of Creatures, as Paper and Pack-thred into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him theſe thing, and riches, and other mercies into the bargain.

Mat. 9. 2.

2 Chro. 1. 10, 11, 12. 13, 14, 15.

Gen. 28. 20 compared with Gen. 32. 10.

Chriſt doth not meaſure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own Riches and Mercies. Gracious ſouls many times receive many gifts and favours from God, that they never dreampt of, nor durſt preſume to beg, which others extreamly ſtrive after, and go without.

*Archelaus* being much importuned by a covetous Courtier for a cup of Gold, wherein hee drank, gave it unto *Euripides*, that ſtood by, ſaying, Thou art worthy to ask

ask, and bee denied, but *Euripides* is worthy of gifts, although hee ask not.

The Prodigal craves no more, but the place of a hired Servant, but hee is entertained as a Son, hee is clad with the best robe, and fed with the fatted Calf, hee hath a Ring for his hand, and Shooes for his feet, rich supplies more than hee desired. *Jacobs* Sons in a time of Famine, desired only Corn, and they return with Corn and Money in their sacks, and with good news too, *Joseph* is alive, and Governour of all *Egypt*.

Luke 15. 19--25.

Gen. 42.

And as his rewards are greater and surer than others rewards, so they are more durable and lasting than others rewards: the Kingdome that hee gives, is a Kingdome that shakes not; the treasures that hee gives, are treasures that corrupt not; and the glory that hee gives is glory that fadeth not away; but the rewards that men give, are like themselves, fickle and unconstant, they are withering and fading.

Heb. 12. 28
Mat. 6. 19, 20.
1 Pet. 1. 4.

*Xerxes* Crowned his Steert-man in the morning, and Beheaded him in the evening of the same day.

And *Adronicus* the Greek Emperour, crowned his Admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the after noon.

*Roffensis* had a Cardinals Hat sent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him. Most may say of their Crowns, as that King said of his, O Crown! more noble than happy. It was a just complaint which long agoe was made against the Heathen Gods, (*O faciles dare summa deos, eademque tueri, difficiles!*.) they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the possession of them; the world may give you great things, but the World cannot maintain you in the possession of them; but the great things, the great rewards that Christ gives his, hee will for ever maintain them in the possession of them, otherwise Hea-

Heaven would not bee Heaven, Glory would not bee Glory; now by all these things you see, that it is a very great Honour to bee an Old Disciple, an Old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you begin to bee really good betimes, except in the morning of your Youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth, to our selves.

You see beloved, that it is the great Duty and concernment of Young Men, *To bee really good betimes*: If this bee so; Then,

## Use I.

First, This Truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such Young Men, that are onely seemingly good, that make some shews of goodnesse, but are not right toward

ward God at the Root.

2 Chr. 24. 1,2,3,4,5, 6,13,14, 15,16.

As *Joash* when hee was young he seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* lived, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buried with him.

*Neroes* first five years are famous, but afterwards who more cruel.

Ah! how many in these dayes that have been seemingly good, have turned to bee naught, very naught, yea, stark naught?

It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled, hee was no wayes tainted in his reputation, and that whilest *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, hee feigned those vertues which hee had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself, in the hearts of the people; but after hee had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controlement, there was no fact in which hee was not faulty, no crime to which hee was not accessary.

There are some that write, that after *Demas* had forsaken *Paul*, hee became a Priest in an Idol Temple.

Oh! That this were not applicable to many young persons in

these

these daies, who have made great shews, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to out-shine the Stars, but are now gone out like so many snuffs, to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the Gospel, the grief of others, and the hazard of their own souls.

It was a custome of old, when any was baptized, the Minister delivered a white garment to bee put on, saying, Take thou this white vestment, and see thou bring it forth without spot at the Judgement seat of Jesus Christ; whereupon one *Maritta* baptizing one *Elpidophorus*; who when hee was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, hee brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, shakes it against him, saying, This linnen garment, *Elpidophorus*, shall accuse thee at the coming of Christ, which I have kept by mee as a witnesse of thy Apostacy.

Crabs that go backward, are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Lev. 11. 10

Ah! young men and women, your former professions will bee a sad witnesse against you in the great

great day of our Lord Jesus, except
Pro.14.14 you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord.

Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never
2Pet.2.21 pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousnesse, than after you have known it, to turn from the holy Commandement!

*Cyprian* in his Sermon *de lapsis*, reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and died fearfully.

Oh the delusions, and the Christ-dethroning, conscience-wasting, and soul-undoing opinions, and principles, that many Young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture seems to bee made good in
Jer.17.13. power upon them: *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to bee ashamed, and they that depart from him, shall bee written upon the dust*; to begin well, and not to proceed, is but

but to aspire to a higher pitch, that the fall may be the more desperate. Backsliding is a wounding sin. You read of no arms for the back, though you do for the breast: Hee that is but seemingly good, will prove at last exceeding bad, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *They wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Hos. 4.14. Eph. 6, 11, 18.

The Wolf, though he often dissembles, and closely hides his nature, yet he will one time or other shew himself to be a Wolf.

In the dayes of *Hadrian* the Emperour, there was one *Bencosby*, who gathering a multitude of *Jews* together, called himself *Ben cocuba*, the son of a star, applying that propheſie to himself, *Numb.* 23. 17. but his mask was taken off, his Hypocrisie discovered, and hee found to be *Barchosaba*, the son of a lye; this age hath afforded many such Monsters, but their folly is discovered, and their practises abhorred. This was the Young Mans commendation in the Text, *That there was found in him some real good*

Comets make a greater blaze than fixed stars.

*good towards the Lord.*

## Use II.

Secondly, This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities, that are dishonouring, provoking, and displeasing to the Lord; who roar, and revel, and gad, and game, and dice, and drink, and drab, and what not? these make work with a witness for repentance, or hell, or the physitian of souls.

I shall but touch upon the evils of Youth, and then come to that which is mostly intended.

## CHAP. III.

*The first evil that most properly attends Youth, is Pride.*

1 Tim. 3. 6. Pride of heart, Pride of apparel, pride of parts; young men are apt to

to bee proud of health, ſtrength, friends, relations, wit, wealth, wiſdome: two things are very rare, the one is to ſee a young man humble and watchful, and the other is to ſee an old man contented and cheerful.

*Bernard* ſaith, that pride is the Rich mans couzen, and experience every day ſpeaks out pride to bee the Young mans couzen. God (ſaid one) had three Sons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Chriſt*, the firſt aſpired to bee like God in power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven: The ſecond to bee like him in knowledge, and was therefore deſervedly driven out of *Eden*, when young: The Third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodneſs, mercy, and humility, and by ſo doing obtained an everlaſting inheritance.

Pride cannot climb ſo high, but juſtice will ſit above.

Remember this, young men, and as you would get a Paradiſe, and keep a Paradiſe, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of evil

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though hee were a dwarf, yet would bee pictured tall of ſtature.

*Pſaphon*, a proud Lybian would needs bee a God, and having caught ſome birds, hee taught them to ſpeak and prattle, The great God *Pſaphon*.

*Menecrates*, a proud Phyſician, wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a God, to *Philip* a King.

Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, having got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simonides*) for that there were ſo many beggers of his kin, and ſet the houſe on fire wherein hee was born, becauſe no body ſhould point at it.

What ſad evils *Pharoahs* pride, and *Hamans* pride, and *Herods* pride, and *Belſhazzars* pride put them upon, I ſhall not now mention.

*Acce* an old woman, ſeeing her deformity in a glaſſe, went mad, &c.

Ah young men, young men! had others a window to look into your breaſts, or did your hearts ſtand where your faces do, you would even bee afraid of your ſelves,

ſelves, you would loathe and abhor your ſelves.

Ah! young men, young men, as you would have God to keep houſe with you, as you would have his minde and ſecrets made known to you, as you would have Chriſt to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, and attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

*Tertullians* counſel to the young gallants of thoſe times was excellent, cloathe your ſelves (ſaid he) with the ſilk of piety, with the ſatin of ſanctity, and with the purple of modeſty; So ſhall you have God himſelf to be your Suiter. *Tert. de Cult. fœm. Cap. 13.*

2 Evil.

*The ſecond evil that youth is ſubject to, is ſenſual pleaſures and delights. Rejoyce, Oh young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes.* The wiſe man by an Ironical conceſſion, bids Eccl. 11 9. 2 Sam. 13. 23--29. ἡδονὴ ἀλέκτρυων. Pleaſure is the bait of ſin, ſaith *Plato.*

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though hee were a dwarf, yet would bee pictured tall of ſtature.

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selves, you would loathe and abhor your selves.

Ah! young men, young men, as you would have God to keep house with you, as you would have his minde and secrets made known to you, as you would have Christ to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, and attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

*Tertullians* counsel to the young gallants of those times was excellent, cloathe your selves (said he) with the silk of piety, with the satin of sanctity, and with the purple of modesty; So shall you have God himself to be your Suiter. *Tert. de Cult. fæm. Cap. 13.*

2 Evil.

*The second evil that youth is subject to, is sensual pleasures and delights. Rejoyce, Oh young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.* The wise man by an Ironical concession, bids Eccl. 11 9. 2 Sam. 13. 23--29. ἡδονὴ ἀλέκτρων. Pleasure is the bait of sin, saith *Plato.*

him rejoyce, &c. Sin, &c. thou art wilful, and reſolved upon taking thy pleaſure, goe on, take thy courſe: this hee ſpeaks by way of mockage, and bitter ſcoffe, &c. but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement. So *Sampſon* made a feaſt; for ſo uſed the young men to do, the hearts of young men uſually are much given up to pleaſure. I have read of a young man, who was very much given up to pleaſures, hee ſtanding by St. *Ambroſe*, and ſeeing his excellent death, turned to other young men by him, and ſaid,

Judg. 14. 10.

Oh! that I might live with you, and dye with him. Senſual pleaſures are like to thoſe Locuſts, *Rev.* 9. 7. the crowns upon whoſe heads are ſaid to be only as it were ſuch, or ſuch in appearance, and like gold, but *verſe* 10. it is ſaid, there were (not as it were, but) ſtings in their tails.

They were much out that held pleaſure to bee mans *ſummum bonum.*

Senſual pleaſures, are but ſeeming, and appearing pleaſures, but the pains that attend them are true

true and real; hee that delights in ſenſual pleaſures, ſhall finde his greateſt pleaſures, become his bittereſt pains.

The Heathens look'd upon the back parts of pleaſure, and ſaw it going away from them, and leaving a ſting behinde.

Pleaſures paſs away as ſoon as they have wearied out the body, and leave it as a bunch of grapes; whoſe juice hath been preſſed out; which made one to ſay, (*Nulla major voluptas, quam voluptatis faſtidium*) I ſee no greater pleaſure in this world, than the contempt of pleaſure.

*Julian*, though an Apoſtate, yet profeſſed, that the pleaſures of the body were far below a great ſpirit. And *Tully* ſaith, hee is not worthy of the name of a man (*qui unum diem velit eſſe in voluptate*) that would entirely ſpend one whole day in pleaſures; it is better not to deſire pleaſures, than to enjoy them. I ſaid of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what Eccl. 2. 2.

doſt thou? The interrogation bids a challenge to all the Maſters of mirth, to produce any one ſatisfactory fruit which it affordeth, if they could.

*Xerxes* being weary of all pleaſures, promiſed rewards to the inventers of new pleaſures, which being invented, he nevertheleſſe remained unſatisfied. As a Bee flieth from flower to flower, and is not ſatisfied, and as a ſick man removes from one bed to another, from one ſeat to another, from one chamber to another, for eaſe, and findes none: So men given up to ſenſual pleaſures, go from one pleaſure to another, but can finde no content, no ſatisfaction in
Eccl. 1.8. their pleaſures. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* There is a curſe of unſatisfiableneſſe lies upon the creature; honours cannot ſatisfie the ambitious man, nor riches the covetous man, nor pleaſures the voluptuous man; man cannot take off the wearineſſe of one pleaſure,

by

by another, for after a few evaporated minutes are ſpent in pleaſures, the body preſently fails the minde, and the minde the deſire, and the deſire the ſatisfaction, and all the man.

Pleaſures are *Furos* in the purſuit, and but clouds in the enjoyment; Pleaſure is a beautiful harlot, ſitting in her Chariot, whoſe four wheels are Pride, Gluttony, Luſt, and Idleneſſe; the two horſes are, Proſperity and Abundance; the two drivers are, Idleneſs, and Security, her attendants and followers are, guilt, grief, late repentance (if any) and oft death and ruine; many great men, and many ſtrong men, and many rich men, and many hopeful men, and many young men, have come to their ends by her, but never any enjoyed full ſatisfaction and content in her.

Ah! Young men, Young men, avoid this harlot, and come not neer the door of her houſe. And as for lawful pleaſures, let me onely ſay this, 'tis your wiſdome

*Eccanus* ſaith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is ſweet, but in the end it breeds *choler*, ſo do worldly pleaſures.

only to touch them, to taſte them, and to uſe them, as *Mithridates* uſed poyſon; to fortifie your ſelves againſt caſual extremities and maladies: when Mr. *Roger Aſcham* asked the Lady *Jane Gray*, how ſhee could loſe ſuch paſtime, her Father with the Dutcheſſe, being a hunting in the Park; ſmilingly anſwered, all the ſport in the Park is but a ſhadow of that pleaſure I find in this book, having a good book in her hand.

*Auguſtine* before his converſion, could not tell how to live without thoſe pleaſures which hee delighted much in, but when his nature was changed, and his heart graciouſly turned to the Lord, O how ſweet (ſaith he) is it to bee without thoſe former ſweet delights!

Ah! Young men, when once you come to experience the goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe that is in the Lord, and in his Word, and waies, you will then ſit down and grieve, that you have ſpent more Wine in the cup, than Oil in the lamp.

There

There are no pleaſures ſo delighting, ſo ſatisfying, ſo raviſhing, ſo ingaging, and ſo abiding, as thoſe that ſpring from union, and communion with God, as thoſe that flow from a ſenſe of intereſt in God, and from an humble and a holy walking with God.

3 Evil.

*The third ſinne of youth is raſhneſſe.*

They many times know little, and fear leſs, and ſo are apt raſhly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazard. *Exhort young men to bee ſober minded, or diſcreet.* They are apt to bee raſh, to bee hot-ſpurs. As you may ſee in *Rehoboams* young Counſellers, who counſelled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthen) that his little finger ſhould bee thicker than his Fathers loins, and that hee would add to their yoak, and that

*Ariſt. Polit.*

Tit. 2. 6.

1 King. 12. 8, 9, 10, 11.

whereas his Father had chastized them with Whips, hee would chastize them with Scorpions, this rash counsel proved *Rehoboams* ruine, yea, *David* himself, though a good man, yet being in his warm blood, and young, how sadly was hee overtaken with rashnesse? *As the Lord God of* Israel *liveth* (saith hee) *except thou hadst hastened, and come to meet mee, surely there had not been left unto* Nabal, *by to morrow light, any that pisseth against the wall.* And this hee bindes with an oath; because the Master was foolishly wilful, the innocent servants must all bee woful; and because *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would be prodigal of his blood.

1 Sam. 25. 34, 35.

*Diis proximus ille est, quem ratio, non ira, movet. Sen.*

He is next to God, whom reason, not anger moveth.

Ah! how unlike a Christian, yea, how below a man, doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up, and hee a captive to rashnesse, and passion? Rashnesse will admit of naught for reason, but what unreasonable self shall dictate for reason; as sloath seldome

dome bringeth actions to good birth, ſo raſhneſſe makes them alwaies abortive, ere well formed: A raſh ſpirit is an ungodlike ſpirit; a raſh ſpirit is a weak ſpirit, it is an effeminate ſpirit. *A man of underſtanding is of an excellent ſpirit*, or as the Hebrew will bear, is of a cool ſpirit, not raſh and hot, ready at every turn to put out his ſoul in wrath. Raſhneſſe unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below man-hood. *Heroſtratus* (a hot-ſpur) an obſcure baſe fellow, did in one night by fire deſtroy the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, which was two hundred and twenty years in building, of all *Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labours and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen; the truth is, there would bee no end, ſhould I diſcover the many ſad and great evils that are uſhered into the world by that one evil raſhneſſe, which uſually attends youth, &c. and therefore young men decline it, and arm your ſelves againſt it, &c. Pro. 17. 27.

4 Evil.

## 4 Evil.

*The fourth sin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking and scoffing at religious men, and religious things.*

They were young ones, that scoffingly and scornfully said, to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head, Go up thou bald-head.* And the young men derided and mocked *Job. But now, they that are younger than I, have mee in derision; whose Fathers I would have disdained, to have set with the dogs of my flock. Upon my right hand rise the youth, they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the waies of their destruction, &c.* And Oh that this age did not afford many such Monsters, who are notable, who are infamous in this black Art of scoffing and deriding the people of God, and the wayes of God.

2 Kings 2. 23, 24. Job 30. 1, 12, 13, 14, 15.

The *Athenians* once scoffed at *Sylla*'s wife, and it had well nigh cost the razing of their City, hee was

was so provoked with the indignity, and will you think it safe to scoff at the people of God, who are the Spouse of Christ, who are as the Apple of his eye, who are the signet on his right hand, his portion, his pleasant portion, his inheritance, his Jewel, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men! will you seriously consider how sadly and sorely hee hath punished other scoffers and mockers? and by his judgements on them, bee warned never to scoff at the people of God, or his waies more. *Julian* the Emperour was a great Scoffer of Christians, but at last hee was struck with an Arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*Vitistie Galilee*) thou *Galilean* (meaning our Saviour Christ) hast overcome mee. *Felix* for one malicious scoff, did nothing day and night but vomit blood, till his unhappy soul was separated from his wretched body. *Perecydes* was consumed by VVorms alive, for giving Reli-

Rev. 2.1—
Zach. 2.5.
Deut. 32.9
Isa. 19.25
Joel 2.17.
Psal. 33.12
Isa. 26.3

Religion but a nick-name. *Lucian*, for barking againſt Religion like a Dog, was by the juſt judgement of God devoured by Dogs, Remember theſe dreadful judgements of God on ſcoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, ſcoff on, but know, that juſtice will at laſt be even with you, nay above you.

## 5 Evil.

*The Fifth and laſt Evil* (that I ſhall mention) *that attends and waits on youth, is luſtfulneſſe, and wantonneſſe.*

2 Tim. 2. 22 Which occaſioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful luſts. *Timothy* was a chaſte and chaſtened peece, he was much ſanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low; hee walked up and down this VVorld, with dying thoughts, and with a weak, diſtempered, declining, dying body; his hea[rt] was in Heaven, and his foot in t[he] Grave, and yet Youth is ſuch [a] ſlippery age, that *Paul* commands him to flee,

flee, to poſt from youthful luſts; though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak ſickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking water rather than wine, yet hee was but a man, yea, a young man; and therefore *Pauls* counſel and command is, that hee flee youthful luſts. And *Salomon*, who had ſadly experienced the ſlipperineſſe of youth, gives this counſel, *Put away the evils of thy fleſh, for childe-hood and youth are vanity.* Hee was a young man that followed the Harlot to her houſe; hee was young in years, and young in knowledge; (*Salazar* upon the words ſaith) that was a happy age, that afforded but one ſimple young man among many, whereas late times afford greater ſtore. Ah! too many of the youths of this age, inſtead of flying from youthful luſts, they poſt and purſue after youthful luſts.

Eccl. 11. 10

Prov. 7. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 &c.

*Chryſoſtome* ſpeaking of youth, ſaith, it is (*difficilem, jactabilem, fallibilem, vehementiſſimiſq; egentem fœnis*) hard to bee ruled, eaſie to bee

*Chryſoſt. Homil. 1. Ad. Populum.*

be drawn away, apt to be deceived, and ſtanding in need of very violent reins.

*Lapide.* The Antients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a veil over his face; his right hand bound behinde him, his left hand looſe, and time behinde him pulling one threed out of his veil every day, intimating that Young men are void of knowledge, and blinde, unfit to do good, ready to do evil, till Time by little and little make them wiſer. Well young man, remember this, that the leaſt ſparklings and kindlings of luſts, will firſt or laſt coſt thee groans, and griefs, tears, and terrours enough. Theſe five are the ſins that uſually are waiting and attending on youth, but from theſe the young man in the Text was by Grace preſerved, and ſecured, which is more than I dare affirm of all, into whoſe hand this Treatiſe ſhall fall. But though theſe five are the ſins of youth; yet they are not all the ſins of youth, for youth is capable

pable of, and ſubject to all other ſins whatſoever, but theſe are the ſpecial ſins that moſt uſually waits and attends on young men, when they are in the ſpring and morning of their youth.

Other ſins attend youth, as, 1 Ignorance, 1 Cor. 14. 20 2 Falſhood Pſal. 58. 3. 3 Exceſſive love of liberty. 4 Impatience of Councils and reproofs. Jer. 31. 18, 19. 5 Impudence, Iſa. 3. 5. 6 A trifling ſpirit, Eccl. 11. 10. 7 Prodigality. Uſe.

## CHAP. IV.

I ſhall now haſten to the main Uſe that I do intend to ſtand upon, and that is a **Uſe** of Exhortation, to all young perſons.

Ah Sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Chriſtian friends, and the ſalvation of your own ſouls; bee exhorted and perſwaded to bee really good betimes. It was the praiſe and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord in the Primroſe of his childe-hood.

Oh that it might be your honour and happineſs! to bee really good betimes, that it might bee to you a praiſe, and a name, that in the morn-

morning of your youth, you have begun to seek the Lord, and to know and love the Lord, and to get an interest and propriety in the Lord: Now that this Exhortation may stick and take,

I beseech you seriously to weigh and ponder these following Motives, or Considerations.

1 Motive.

First consider, *It is an Honour to bee good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning Star; hee is like a Pearl in a Gold Ring. It is mentioned as a singular Honour to the beleeving *Jews*, that they first trusted in Christ, that wee should bee to the praise of his Glory, who first trusted in Christ, this was their praise, their crown, that they were first converted, and turned to Christ and Christianity. So St. *Paul* mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumstance of praise and honour, that they were in Christ before him. Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my Kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who

Eph. 1. 12.

Rom. 16. 7

who are of note among the Apoſtles, who alſo were in Chriſt before mee.

And ſo it was the honour of the houſe of *Stephanas*, that they were the firſt fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory, that they were the firſt that received and welcomed the Goſpel in *Achaia*. 'Tis a greater honour for a young man to outwreſtle ſin, Satan, Temptation, the world, and luſt, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praiſe and honour, that they were firſt in fetching home *David* their King. 1 Cor. 16. 15. 2 Sam. 19. 15.

Ah! Young men and women, it will bee your eternal praiſe and honour, if you ſhall bee before others; if you ſhall bee the firſt among many, who ſhall know the Lord, and ſeek the Lord, who ſhall receive the Lord, and imbrace him; who ſhall cleave to the Lord, and ſerve him; who ſhall honour the Lord, and obey him; who ſhall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. The *Romans* built

Virtues and Honours Temple close together, to shew, that the way to honour was by virtue; and indeed there is no Crown to that which goodnesse sets upon a mans head, all other honour is fading and withering. *Adonibezeck* a mighty Prince, is suddenly made fellow-commoner with the Dogs. And *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mighty Conquerour, turned a grazing among the Oxen. And *Herod* reduced from a conceited god, to be the most loathsome of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures, upon the suit of his affronted Creatour. And *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next; I might tell you of *Bajazet*, and *Bellisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others, who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honour and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time; But that honour that arises from mens being

Judg. 1.7.

Dan. 4.28

Act. 12.23

Esth. 7.10

ral heart turns all into Gold, into gain, as Scripture and Experience do abundantly evidence: now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to bee good betimes, are in the ready way, the high way to bee high in Heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth: and therefore young men, as you would be high in Heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to bee good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your dayes.

## 7 Motive.

The seventh Motive, or consideration to provoke and incite you to bee good betimes, is, *To consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the spring and morning of your youth.*

Jer. 2. 2. Go and cry in the ears of *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, *I remember thee, the kindneſſe of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after mee in the wilderneſs, in a land that was not ſown.*

Ah! how kindely, how ſweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth; while their bones were full of marrow, while they were ſtrong and fit for ſervice, while nature was freſh, lively, and vigorous; In the Law, God called for the firſt of all things, hee required not onely the firſt fruits, but the very firſt of the firſt; The firſt of the firſt-fruits of thy land, *Thou ſhalt bring into the houſe of the Lord thy God.* God is the firſt being, the firſt good, and therefore deſerves the firſt of the firſt, and the beſt of the beſt; the firſt and the beſt is not too good for him, who is goodneſſe it ſelf. God in that of *Leviticus* 2. 14. is ſo paſſionately ſet upon having the firſt of the firſt, that hee will not

Exod. 23. 19.

'Tis truly ſaid of God, that he is *Omnia ſuper omnia.*

not ſtay till the green ears of Corn be ripe, but will have the green ears of Corn dried in the fire, leſt hee ſhould loſe his longing.

As many young women, and ſickly children cannot ſtay till the fruit be ripe, but muſt have it while it is green; even ſo ſaith God, my heart, my deſires, are ſo vehemently ſet upon the firſt fruits, the firſt things, that I cannot ſtay, I cannot ſatisfie my ſelf without them; and what would God teach us by all this, but to ſerve him with the firſt-fruits of our age, the prim-roſe of our childe-hood, the morning of our youth. God hath given you of the beſt, do not put him off with the worſt, with the worſt of your time, the worſt of your dayes, the worſt of your ſtrength, leſt he ſwear in his wrath, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt.

## 8 Motive.

The eight Motive or Conſideration to provoke you to bee

Early Converts will never have cause to say, as that despairing Pope said, the Cross could do him no good, because hee had so often sold it away.

good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, is, to consider, that *This may bee a special means to prevent many black temptations, and an incouragement to withstand all temptations, that you may meet with from a tempting Devil, and a tempting world.*

An early turning to the Lord will prevent many temptations to despair, many temptations to neglect the means openly, to despise the means secretly: many temptations about the being of God, the goodnesse, faithfulnesse, truth, and justice of God; temptations to despair, temptations to lay violent hands on a mans self; temptations to question all that God hath said, and that Christ hath suffered, arises many times from mens delaying, and putting off of God to the last; all which, with many others, are prevented by a mans seeking and serving of the Lord in the spring and morning of his youth. It is reported of the Harts of *Scythia*,

thia, that they teach their young ones to leap from Bank to Bank, from Rock to Rock, from one Turf to another (by leaping before them) by which means when they are hunted, no beast of prey can ever take them; so when persons exercise themselves in Godlinesse, when they are young, when they leap from one measure of holinesse to another, when they are in the morning of their dayes; Satan that mighty hunter after Souls, may pursue them with his temptations, but hee shall not overtake them, hee shall not prevail over them. As you see in *Moses*, *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and the three Children, these knew the Lord, and gave up themselves to the Lord in the prime and Prim-rose of their Youth; and these were all temptation-proof; Satan and the World pursued them, but could not overtake them; when the Devil and the World had done their worst, the Young mens bows a-

Heb. 11. Gen. 39. Dan. 3. ult.

Gen. 49. 23, 24.

bode in ſtrength, and their hands (to reſiſt) were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Ego non ſum ego*, ſaid that young convert, when tempted, I am not the man that I was.

*Luther* tells of a young Virgin, that uſed to reſiſt all temptations, with this, *Chriſtianus ſum*, I am a Chriſtian. Early Converts may ſay, when tempted, as hee, tell mee not Satan what I have been, but what I am, and will bee; or as hee in the like caſe, whatſoever I was, I am now in Chriſt, a new Creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or as hee, the more deſperate my diſeaſe was, the more I admire the Phyſician. Yea, thou mayeſt yet ſtrain it a peg higher, and ſay, the greater my ſins were, the greater is my honour. As the Devils which once *Mary Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory. When *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabritius* the firſt day with an Elephant, ſo huge and monſtrous a beaſt, as before he had not ſeen,

*Bernard. Beza. Auguſtin.* Such as thou art now, I was once, but ſuch as I am now, thou wilt never bee, ſaid *Diogenes* to a baſe fellow that told him, hee had once been a forger of mony.

seen, the next day with mony, and promises of honour; hee answered, I fear not thy force, I am too wise for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would bee free from the saddest and darkest temptations; and as you would bee armed against all temptations; O labour as for life, to bee good betimes! seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth; no way like this for the preventing earth-quakes, heart-quakes, stormy dayes, and winter nights, &c.

## 9 Motive.

The nineth Motive or Consideration to stir up young men to bee good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth, is, *To consider the worth and excellency of souls.*

A soul is a spiritual immortal substance, it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of union with God, of commu-

Luk. 23. 13
Mat. 19. 28
Act. 7. ult.

Phil. 1. 23. nion with God, and of a bleſſed and happy fruition of God.

Chriſt left his Fathers boſome for the good of ſouls; hee aſſumed mans nature for the ſalvation of mans ſoul; Chriſt prayed for ſouls, hee ſweat for ſouls, hee wept for ſouls, hee bled for ſouls, hee hung on the Croſs for ſouls, hee trod the Wine-preſſe of his Fathers wrath for ſouls, hee died for ſouls, hee roſe again from death for ſouls, hee aſcended for ſouls, hee intercedes for ſouls, and all the glorious preparations that hee hath been a making in Heaven theſe ſixteen hundred years, is for ſouls.

Heb. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Iſa. 63 3, 4

Joh. 14. 1, 2, 3.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not play the Courtier with your precious ſouls, the Courtier doth all things late; hee riſes late, dines late, ſups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah! Sirs, the good of your ſouls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to bee

firſt

first regarded and provided for, and that partly, because it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly, because therein mostly and properly is the Image of God stampt, and partly, because it is the first converted, and partly, because it shall bee the first and most glorified.

*O anima Dei insignita imagine, desponsata fide, donat spiritu. Bern.*

Ah! young men, young men, if they bee worse than Infidels, that make no provision for their Families, what monsters are they that make not provision for their own souls? this will bee bitterness in the end.

1 Tim. 5. 8.

*Cæsar Borgias* being sick to death, lamentingly said, When I lived, I provided for every thing but Death; now I must dye, and am unprovided to dye; this was a Dart at his heart, and it will at last bee a Dagger at yours; who feast your bodies, but starve your souls; who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part.

If

If they deserve a hanging, who feast their Slaves, and starve their Wives, that make provision for their enemies, but none for their friends; how will you escape hanging in Hell, who make provision for every thing, yea, for your very lusts, but make no provision for your immortal souls? We hate the *Turk* for selling Christians for slaves, and what shall wee think then of those who sell themselves, their precious souls, for toyes and trifles that cannot profit; who practically say, what once a prophane Noble man of *Naples* verbally said, *viz.* that hee had two souls in his body, one for God, and another for whosoever would buy it.

Jam. 4. 2, 3. Hos. 7. 13, 14.

*Callenucius* relates this story.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not pawn your souls, do not sell your souls, do not exchange away your souls, do not trifle and fool away your precious souls, they are Jewels, more worth than a thousand Worlds, yea, than Heaven and Earth; if they are safe, all is safe; but if they are lost, all is lost,

loſt, God loſt, and Chriſt loſt, and the ſociety of glorious Angels, and bleſſed Saints loſt, and Heaven loſt, and that for ever. *Granſtenſis* tells of a woman that was ſo affected with ſouls miſcarryings, that ſhe beſought God to ſtop up the paſſage into Hell with her ſoul and body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young perſons were ſo affected with the worth and excellency of their ſouls, and ſo allarmed with the hazard and danger of loſing their ſouls, as that they may in the ſpring and morning of their dayes enquire after the Lord, and ſeek him, and ſerve him with all their might, that ſo their precious and immortal ſouls may bee ſafe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the laſt place,

## 10 Motive.

Tenthly, Conſider, Young, men, *That God will at laſt bring you to a reckoning*; Hee will at laſt

Eccl. 11.9.

laſt bring you to judgement. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine heart; and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee unto Judgement.* In theſe words you have two things, Firſt, An Ironical conceſſion, hee bids him rejoyce, &c. hee yeelds him what hee would have, by an irony, by way of mockage and bitter ſcoff. Now thou art young, and ſtrong, lively, and luſty, and thy bones are full of Marrow; thou art reſolved to bee proud, and ſcornfull, to indulge the fleſh, and to follow thy delights, and pleaſures; well, take thy courſe if thou dareſt, or if thou haſt a minde to it, if thy heart bee ſo ſet upon it. *Rejoyce in thy youth, &c.* The ſecond is a commination, or a ſad and ſevere præmonition. But know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee into judgement; will bring thee, theſe

*Hierom* ſtil thought that that noiſe was in his ears (*ſurgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*) ariſe you dead and come to judgment.

theſe words import two things; firſt, the unwillingneſſe of youth to come to judgement; ſecondly, the unavoidableneſſe that Youth muſt come to judgement; but how ſoon you ſhall bee brought to judgement, is onely known to God.

St. *Auguſtine* confeſſes in one of his Books, that as long as his Conſcience was gnawed with the guilt of ſome youthful luſt, hee was once inſnared with, the very hearing of a Day of Judgement, was even a Hell to him.

Hiſtories tell us of a young man, who being for ſome Capital offence condemned to dye, grew gray in one nights ſpace, and was therefore pittied, and ſpared.

Ah! Young men, young men, that the ſerious thoughts of this great Day, may put you upon breaking off the ſinnes of your youth; and the dedicating of your ſelves to the knowledge, love, and ſervice of the Lord, in the

the ſpring and flower of your dayes. Ah! young men, conſider the errours of your lives, the wickedneſſe of your hearts, the ſinfulneſſe of your wayes, and that ſtrict account that ere long you muſt bee brought to before the Judge of all the world.

The Heathens themſelves had ſome kinde of dread and expectation of ſuch a day; and therefore when St. *Paul* ſpake of Judgement to come, *Fœlix* trembled, though a Heathen.

Act. 24. 25

The bringing into Judgement is a thing which is known by reaſon, and is clear by the light of Nature; wherefore in *Auſtria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourſcore and thirteen year, and had ſpent all his life in pleaſures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour; from hence, ſaith he, wee may conclude, the ſouls immortality; for if there bee a God that

The Philoſophers had ſome dreams of a ſevere day of account, as appeareth by *Plato's Georgi*, & many paſſages in *Tulli*, &c.

that ruleth this world ( as Divines and Philoſophers do teach ) and that hee is juſt, no one denieth; ſurely there are other places to which ſouls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward, or puniſhment, for here wee ſee, that neither rewards are given to the good, nor puniſhments to the evil. *Æneas Sylvius.*

Ah! Young men, knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, and the terrour of this day, Oh! that you would bee perſwaded to flee from the wrath to come; to caſt away the Idols of your ſouls, to repent and bee converted in the Prim-roſe of your youth, that your ſinnes may bee blotted out when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord; or elſe woe, woe to you that ever you were Born. I have read a ſtory of one, who being riſen from the dead, and being asked in what condition hee was, hee made anſwer, no man doth beleeve, no man doth beleeve, 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. Act. 3. 19.

beleeve, no man doth beleeve. And being further asked what he meant by that repetition, hee answered, no man doth beleeve, how exactly God examineth, how strictly God judgeth, how severely hee punisheth. Oh! that the wayes of most young persons did not declare to all the World that they doe not, and that they will not beleeve the dread, and terrour of that day, that will admit of no plea, nor place for Apology or appeal; the highest and last Tribunal, can never bee appealed from, or repealed.

The *Turks* have a tradition, and frantick opinion, that wicked men shall at the great day carry their sinnes in latchets after their Captain *Cain*, but well would it bee for them, if this should be all their punishment in that great day.

Now if for all that hath been said, you are resolved to spend the flower of your dayes, and the prime of your strength, in the service of sin and the World, then know, that no tongue can expresse, no heart can conceive that trouble of minde, that terrour of soul, that horrour of conscience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that sighing and groaning, that

that cursing and banning, that stamping and tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, that certainly shall attend you, when God shall bring you into judgement for all your looseneſſe, and lightneſſe, for all your wickedneſſe, and wantonneſſe, for all your prophaneneſſe, and baſeneſſe, for all your neglect of God, your grieving the Comforter, your trampling under foot the bloud of a Saviour, for your deſpiſing of the means, for your prizing earth above heaven, and the pleaſures of this World, above the pleaſures that bee at Gods right hand.

Oh! how will you wiſh in that day when your ſins ſhall bee charged on you, when juſtice ſhall bee armed againſt you, when Conſcience ſhall bee gnawing within you; when the World ſhall bee a flaming Fire about you, when the Gates of Heaven ſhall be ſhut againſt you, and the flame of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

St. *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaking of this day, ſaith, for Chriſt at this day to ſay, depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thouſand Hels, *Chry. Hom. ad Pop. Antioch.*

Angels and Saints shall sit in judgement upon you, and for ever turn their faces from you, when evil spirits shall bee terrifying of you, and Jesus Christ for ever disowning of you, how will you (I say) wish in that day that you had never been born, or that you might now bee unborn, or that your Mothers wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wish to bee turned into a bird, a beast, a stock, a stone, a Toad, a Tree! Oh that our immortal souls were mortal! O that wee were nothing! O that we were any thing but what wee are.

*Joan. Damasc. & Author. Anonym. de quat. Noviss. Impress. Daven. Ann.* 1494

I have read a remarkable story of a King, that was heavy, and sad, and wept, which when his Brother saw, hee asked him why hee was so pensive? because (saith hee) I have judged others, and now I must bee judged my self: And why (saith his brother) do you so take on for this, it will (happily) be a long time ere that day come, and besides that, it is but a sleight matter.

ter. The King said little to it for the present.

Now it was a custome in that Country, when any had committed Treason, there was a Trumpet sounded at his door in the night time; and hee was next day brought out to bee executed, now the King commanded a Trumpet to bee sounded at his brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his sleep, when he heard it, arose, and came quaking and trembling to the King; How now, saith the King? what's the matter you are so affrighted? I am, saith hee, attached of Treason, and next morning I shall bee Executed; Why, saith the King to him again, are you so troubled at that, knowing that you shall bee judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conscience tells you, you are clear of? How much more therefore may I bee afraid, seeing that God shall judge mee, and not in a matter that my Conscience frees mee

of, but of that whereof I am guilty? and beside this, if the worst come, it is but a temporary death you shall dye, but I am liable to death eternal, both of body and soul. I will leave the Application to those young persons, that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to bee good betimes, and to acquaint themselves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to those young men and women, who begin to seek, serve, and love the Lord in the prime-rose of their daies, the day of Judgement will bee to them (*melodia in aura, jubilum in corde*) like musick in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart, this day will bee to them, a day of refreshing, a day of redemption, a day of vindication, a day of Coronation, a day of Consolation, a day of Salvation, it will bee to them, a Marriage day, a Harvest day, a Pay day: Now the Lord will pay them for all the prayers they have

Act. 3.19, 20, 21, 22. Mic. 7.7. 8, 9.10, 11. Rev. 19.6, 7, 8.9, 10. Mat. 25. 34. to v. 41

have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the tears they have shed, in this great day Christ will remember all the individual Offices of Love and Friendship shewed to any of his, now hee will mention many things for their honour and comfort that they never minded, now the least and lowest acts of love and pity towards his, shall bee interpreted as a special kindnesse shewed to himself. Now the Crown shall bee set upon their heads, and the Royal Robe put upon their backs, now all the World shall see that they have not served the Lord for naught: Now Christ will pass over all their weaknesses, and make honourable mention of all the services they have performed, of all the mercies they have improved, and of all the great things that for his name and glory, they have suffered.

2 Tim. 4. 8
Mal. 3. 17, 18.

## CHAP. V.

*Queſt.* BUt here an apt queſtion may bee moved, *viz.*

*Whether at this great day, the ſins of the Saints ſhall bee brought into the judgement of diſcuſſion and diſcovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publickly manifeſt, proclaim, and make mention of the ſins of his people, or no?*

I humbly judge according to my preſent light, that hee will not; and my reaſons for it are theſe, *viz.*

The firſt is drawn from Chriſts judicial proceedings in the laſt day, ſet down largely and clearly in the 25. of St. *Matthew*, where hee innumerateth onely the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the ſpots and blots, of the ſtains and blemiſhes, of the infirmities, and enormities, of the weakneſſes and wickedneſſes of his people. My

Deut. 32. 4, 5, 6.

Second Reaſon is taken from Chriſts vehement proteſtations, that

that they ſhall not come into judgement, John 5. 24. *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, hee that heareth my word, and beleeveth on him that ſent mee, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.* Thoſe words, ſhall not come into condemnation, are not rightly tranſlated, the Original is εἰς κρίσιν, ſhall not come into judgement, not into damnation, as you read it in all your Engliſh Books. I will not ſay what ſhould put men upon this expoſition, rather than a true tranſlation of the Original word; further, it is very obſervable, that no Evangeliſt uſeth this double aſſeveration, but St. *John*, and he never uſeth it but in matters of greateſt weight and importance, and to ſhew the earneſtneſſe of his ſpirit, and to ſtir us up to better attention, and to put the thing aſſerted out of all queſtion, and beyond all contradiction; as when wee would put a thing for ever out of all queſtion, wee do it by

*Vide Aquin. 87. Suppl. Eſt. in l. 4. Sen. diſt. 47.*

Joh. 1. 51. ch. 3. 3. 11 ch. 6. 26. 32, 47, 53, &c.

a double aſſeveration, verily, verily, 'tis ſo, &c.

Thirdly, becauſe his not bringing their ſinnes into judgement, doth moſt and beſt agree with many precious and glorious expreſſions that wee finde ſcattered (as ſo many ſhining ſparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture; as Firſt, VVith thoſe of Gods blotting out the ſinnes of his People. *I, even I am hee that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my owne ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* Iſa.43.25. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy tranſgreſſions, and as a cloud thy ſins.* Iſa.44.22. VVho is this that blots out tranſgreſſions? hee that hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell, at his girdle, that opens and no man ſhuts, that ſhuts and no man opens, hee that hath the power of life and death, of condemning and abſolving, of killing and making alive, hee it is that blots out tranſgreſſions; if an under Officer ſhould blot out an indictment, that perhaps

might do a man no good, a man might for all that bee at laſt caſt by the Judge; but when the Judge or King ſhall blot out the indictment with their own hand, then the indictment cannot return; now this is every Beleevers caſe and happineſſe.

Secondly, To thoſe glorious expreſſions of Gods not remembring of their ſinnes any more, Iſa. 43. 25. *And I will not remember thy ſinnes;* Jer. 31. 34. *And they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know yee the Lord, for they ſhall all know mee from the leaſt of them, to the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſinne no more.* So the Apoſtle, Heb. 8. 12. *For I will bee merciful to their unrighteouſneſſe, and their ſinnes, and their iniquities will I remember no more.*

And again; the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *This is the Covenant that I will make with them, after thoſe dayes.*

*daies*, saith the Lord; *I will put my Laws into their hearts, and in their mindes will I write them: and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

Heb. 10. 17

That which *Cicero* said flatteringly of *Cæsar*, is truly affirmed of God, *Nihil oblivisci solet præter injurias*, hee forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that daily are done him by his.

The meaning is, their iniquities shall quite bee forgotten, I will never mention them more, I will never take notice of them more, they shall never hear more of them from mee, though God hath an iron memory to remember the sinnes of the wicked; yet hee hath no memory to remember the sinnes of the Righteous.

Thirdly, His not bringing their Sinnes into judgement doth most and best agree with those blessed expressions, of his casting their Sinnes into the depth of the Sea; and of his casting them behinde his back. *Hee will turn again, hee will have compassion upon us, hee will subdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their Sinnes into the depths of the Sea*, where sinne is once pardoned, the remission stands

Mic. 7. 19.

ſtands never to bee repealed, pardoned ſinnes ſhall never come in account againſt the pardoned man, before God any more, for ſo much doth this borrowed ſpeech import: if a thing were caſt into a River, it might bee brought up again, or if it were caſt upon the Sea, it might bee diſcerned, and taken up again, but when it is caſt into the depths, the bottome of the Sea, it can never bee boyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text the Lord would have us to know, the ſinnes pardoned ſhall riſe no more, they ſhall never be ſeen more, they ſhall never come on the account more; hee will ſo drown their ſinnes, that they ſhall never come up before him the ſecond time.

And ſo much that others Scripture imports. *Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterneſſe, but thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the pit of Corruption:* Iſa. 38. 17.

*ruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behinde thy back*; these last words are a borrowed speech, taken from the manner of men, who are wont to cast behinde their backs, such things as they have no minde to see, regard, or remember. A gracious soul hath alwayes his sinnes before his face (*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before mee*;) and therefore no wonder if the Lord cast them behinde his back. The Father soon forgets, and casts behinde his back those faults that the childe remembers, and hath alwayes in his eyes; so doth the Father of spirits.

Psal.51.3.

Fourthly, *His not bringing their sinnes into judgement*, doth best agree with that sweet and choice expression of Gods pardoning the sinnes of his people; *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against mee, and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against mee.* So *Micah*, *Who*

Jer.33.8

*Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage* (as though hee would not see it, but wink at it) *hee retaineth not his anger for ever, because hee delighteth in Mercy.* The Hebrew word (*Nose* from *Nasa*) that is here rendered, pardoneth, signifies a taking away; when God pardons sin, hee takes it sheer away, that if it should bee sought for, yet it could not bee found, as the Prophet speaks; *In those daies, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of* Israel *shall bee sought for, and there shall bee none; and the sins of* Judah, *and they shall not bee found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve*; and these words, *and passeth by*, in the (aforecited) seventh of *Micah*, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (*Vegnober Gnal*) is and *passeth over*. *God passeth over the transgression of his heritage*; that is, hee takes no notice of it; as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of business, seeth not

Mic.7.18.

Jer.50.20.

עבר *Gnabar*, he passed over.

not things before him, his minde being busied about other matters, hee neglects all to minde his businesse. As *David* when hee saw in *Mephibosheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lamenesse, or any other defect, or deformity: So God beholding in his people the glorious image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* say, *do with mee what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sin*; and what is it to pardon sin, but not to mention sin?

Isa.40.1,2

Fiftly, *In his not bringing their sinnes into the judgement of Discussion and Discovery*, Doth best agree to those expressions of Forgiving, and covering; *Blessed is hee whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* In the Original it is in the plural, Blessednesses, loe, here is a plurality of blessings, a chain of Pearls.

Psal.32.1.

The like expression you have in the 85. *Psalme*, and the 2 *verse*.

*Thou*

*Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sinne. Selah.* For the understanding of these Scriptures aright, take notice, that to cover, is a Metaphorical expression, covering is such an action, which is opposed to disclosure; to bee covered, is to bee so hid and closed, as not to appear. Some make the Metaphor from filthy loathsome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carkasses are buried under the ground; some from Garments, that are put upon us to cover our nakednesse; others from the Egyptians that were drowned in the red Sea, and so covered with water; others from a great gulf in the earth, that is filled up and covered with earth, injected into it; and others make it in the last place an allusive expression to the mercy-seat, over which was a covering. Now all these Metaphors in the general, tend to shew this, that the Lord will not look, hee will not see,

*Sic velantur, ut in judicio non revelentur.*

ſee, hee will not take notice of the ſins hee hath pardoned, to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treaſons, and rebellions, and meets with ſuch and ſuch which hee hath pardoned, hee reads on, hee paſſeth by, hee takes no notice of them, the pardoned perſon ſhall never hear more of them, hee will never call him to account for thoſe ſinnes more. So here, &c. When *Cæſar* was painted, hee put his finger upon his ſcar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples ſcars and warts, upon all their weakneſſes and infirmities, that nothing can bee ſeen, but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee*, Cant. 4. 7.

Sixthly, It beſt agrees to that expreſſion of not imputing of ſin. *Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* So the Apoſtle in that *Rom.* 4. 6, 7, 8. now

Pſal. 32. 2.

not

not to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to set iniquity upon his score, who is blessed and pardoned, &c.

Seventhly and lastly, it best agrees with that expression that you have in the 103. *Psalme*, and the 11, and 12, *Verses*. *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: As far as the East is from the West, so far hath hee removed our transgressions from us.* What a vast distance is there betwixt the East and the West? of all visible latitudes, this is the greatest; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevails with me, to judge that Jesus Christ will not bring the sins of the Saints into the judgement of discussion, and discovery in the great day, is, because it seems unsuitable to three considerable things, for Jesus Christ to proclaim the infirmities and miscarriages of his people to all the world.

First, it seems to bee unsuitable to the glory and solemnity of that day, which to the Saints will bee a day of refreshing, a day of restitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been already proved; now how suitable to this great day of solemnity, the proclamation of the Saints sins will bee, I leave the Reader to judge.

Secondly, It seems unsuitable to all those near and dear relations, that Jesus Christ stands in towards his, hee stands in the relation of a *Father*, *a Brother*, *a Head*, *a Husband*, *a Friend*, *an Advocate*: Now are not all these by the Law of relations, bound rather to hide and keep secret (at least from the world) the weaknesses and infirmities of their near and dear relations, and is not Christ? is not Christ much more? By how much hee is more a *Father*, *a Brother*, *a Head*, *a Husband*, *&c.* in a spiritual way, than any others can be in a natural way, &c.

Isa. 9. 6. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 1. 21, 22. Rev. 19. 7. Joh. 15. 1. Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, it ſeems very unſuitable to what the Lord Jeſus requires of his in this World, the Lord requires that his people ſhould caſt a mantle of love, of wiſdome, of ſilence, and ſecreſie over one anothers weakneſſes and infirmities.

Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes, but love covereth all ſins; Loves mantle is very large; love will finde a hand; a plaiſter to clap upon every ſore, *Flavius Veſpaſianus* (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends Vices, and as ready to reveal their Virtues: So is Divine love in the hearts of the Saints; *If thy Brother offend thee, goe and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if hee ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother.* As the Pills of reprehenſion are to bee gilded, and ſugared over with much gentleneſſe, and ſoftneſſe; ſo they are to bee given in ſecret, tell him between him and thee alone. Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abominable.

Pro. 10. 12
1 Pet. 4. 8.

Mat. 18. 15

Heaven it too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Psal.* 15. 3. Now will Jesus Christ have us carry it thus towards offending Christians, and will hee himself act otherwise? nay, it is an evil in us to lay open the weaknesses and infirmities of the Saints to the World? and will it bee an excellency, a glory, a vertue in Christ, to do it in the great day? &c.

Pro. 19, 11

A fifth Argument is this, It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to passe over a transgression*, or to passe by it, as wee doe by persons or things, wee know not, or would take no notice of. Now *it is the glory of a man to passe over a transgression*, and will it not much more be the glory of Christ, silently to passe over the transgressions of his people, in that great Day? The greater the treasons and rebellions are that a Prince passes over, and takes no notice of, the more is it his honour and glo-

*Non amo quemquam nisi offendam*, said a Heathen.

ry;

ry; and ſo doubtleſſe it will bee Chriſts in that great day, to paſſe over all the treaſons and rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them, as well as to forgive them.

The Heathens have long ſince obſerved, that in nothing man came neater to the glory and perfection of God himſelf, than in goodneſs and clemency. Surely if it be ſuch an honour to man, *to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, it cannot bee a diſhonour to Chriſt, to paſſe over the tranſgreſſions of his people, hee having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again ſaith *Salomon*, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*. Prov. 25.2 And why it ſhould not make for the glory of Divine love to conceal the ſins of the Saints in that great Day, I know not: and whether the concealing the ſinnes of the Saints in that great day, will not make moſt for their joy, and wicked mens ſorrow, for their comfort, and wicked mens terrour and torment, I will leave you

to judge, and time and experience to decide; And thus much for the resolution of that great question. Having done with the Motives that may incourage and provoke Young Men to bee good betimes, to know, love, seek, and serve the Lord, in the spring and morning of their daies.

## CHAP. VI.

I Shall now come to those directions and helps, that must (by assistance from Heaven) bee put in practice, if ever you would be good betimes, and serve the Lord in the prim-rose of your daies. Now all that I shall say, will fall under these two heads.

First, *Some things you must carefully, and warily decline, and arm your selves against*, and

Secondly, *There are other things that you must prosecute and follow.*

First, *There are some things that you must warily decline*, and they are these.

1 Direction.

First, *If ever you would bee good betimes, if you would bee gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, Oh! then take heed of putting the day of death far from you.* Amos 6. 3.

Young men are very prone to look upon death afar off, and put it at a great distance from them; they are apt to say to Death, as *Pharaoh* said to *Moses*, *Get thee from mee, and let mee see thy face no more*; Exo. 10. 28 if old men discourse to them of death, they are ready to answer, as the High-Priest did *Judas* (in a different case) *What is that to us, look you unto it*: Mat. 27. 4. wee know sickness will come, and death is a debt that wee must all pay, but surely these guests are a great way from us, for doth not *David* say, *The dayes of a man are threescore years and ten?* Psa. 90. 10 wee have calculated our Nativities, and we cannnot abate a day, a minute, a moment, of *threescore and ten*; and therefore it is even a death to us to think of death, there being so great a distance between our birth-

day, and our dying day, as wee have cast up the account.

Ah young men! it is sad, it is very sad, when you are so wittily wicked, as to say with those in *Ezekiel*, *Behold they of the house of* Israel *say, the vision that hee seeth is for many dayes to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are afarre off.*

Eze. 12. 27

Ah! young men, young men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you strengthen sin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of faith and repentance more hard and difficult; you lay a sad foundation for the greatest fears and doubts.

Ah! How soon may that sad word bee fulfilled upon you. *The Lord of that servant, that saith his Lord delayeth his coming, shall come in a day when hee looketh not for him, and in an hour that hee is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder* (or cut him off) *and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

teeth. When *Sodome*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amaleck*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belshazzar*, when *Dives*, when the Fool in the Gospel, were all in their prime, their pride, when they were all in a flourishing state, and upon the very top of their glory, how strangely, how suddenly, how sadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully, were they brought down to the Grave, to Hell!

Ah young man! who art thou, and what is thy name or fame, what is thy power or place, what is thy dignity or glory, that thou darest promise thy self an exemption from sharing in as sad a portion as ever Justice gave to those who were once very high, who were seated among the Stars, but are now brought down to the sides of the pit? I have read a Story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring with a Deaths head, on this condition, that hee should one hour daily for seven dayes

Isa. 13. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. 15. 16, 17.

dayes together, look and think upon it: which bred a great change in his life.

Ah Young men! the serious thoughts of death may do that for you, that neither friends, counsel, examples, prayers, sermons, tears have not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to dye, is labour in vain, and to put this day far from you, and to live without fear of death, is to dye living. Death seizeth on old men, and layes wait for the youngest. Death is oftentimes as near to the young mans back, as it is to the old mans face.

*Senibus mors in januis, adolescentibus in insidiis, Bern. De convers. ad Cler. c. 14.*

It is storied of *Charls* the fourth King of *France*, that being one time affected with the sense of his many and great sins, hee fetcht a deep sigh, and said to his Wife, By the help of God, I will now so carry my self all my life long, that I will never offend him more; which words hee had no sooner uttered, but hee fell down dead and died.

Do

Do not young men put this day far from you, leſt you are ſuddenly ſurprized, and then you cry out, (when too late) *a Kingdome for a Chriſt, a Kingdome for a Chriſt*; as once Crookt-back *Richard* the Third in his Diſtreſſe, *a Kingdome for a Horſe, a Kingdome for a Horſe.*

Ah young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; *Oh! I am ſo ſick, that I cannot live, and yet* (woful wretch that I am) *ſo ſinful, that I dare not dye; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might dye! Oh that I might do neither!* Well young men, remember this, the frequent, the ſerious thoughts of Death will prevent many a ſinne, it will arm you againſt many temptations, it will ſecure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the World, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make Death eaſie when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdome that

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccl. 9. 10.

*ſhakes*

*shakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away.* Therefore do not, O! do not put the day of Death far from you. Take heed of crying, *Cras, Cras*, to morrow, to morrow, saith *Luther*, for a man lives fourty years before he knows himself to be a fool, and by that time hee sees his folly, his life is finished, so men dye before they begin to live.

## 2 Direction.

Secondly, *If you would bee good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own understanding.*

Pro. 3. 1, 5. Lean not, is a Metaphor from an old or sick man leaning on his staff, &c.

This Counsel wise *Salomon* gives to his son (or the young men in his time) *My Son, forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my Commandements: Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding.*

Youth is the age of folly, of vain-hopes, and over-grown confidence. Ah! how wise might many

many have been, had they not been too early wise in their own opinion.

*Rehoboams* young Counsellours proved the overthrow of his Kingdome. 'Tis brave for youth in all things to bee discreet and sober minded. Three vertues they say are prime ornaments of youth, Modesty, Silence, and Obedience.

Ah! Young men; keep close in every action to this one principle, *viz.* in every action resolve to bee discreet and wise, rather than affectionate and singular.

I remember, that a young Gentleman of *Athens* being to answer for his life, hired an Oratour to make his defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading, but when the young man by often reading it, that hee might recite it publickly by heart, begun to grow weary and displeased with it. The Oratour bid him consider that the

Judges

Judges and the people were to hear it but once; and then it was likely that they at the first instant might bee as well pleased as hee.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your selves, or upon others, will in the end bee bitternesse and vexation of spirit; Young men are very apt to lean on their own VVit, VViſdome, Arts, Parts, as old men are to lean on a staff to support them; (as the Hebrew VVord signifies, that is rendred *Lean*, in that of *Prov.* 3. 5.) this hath been the bane of many a choice wit, the losse of many a brave Head, the ruine of many a subtile pate.

שָׁעַן *Shagnan.*

*Ajax* thought it was onely for Cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for succour, not for him, whence hee was foiled; lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accomplishments, lest you lose them and your selves too. Leaning to natu-

natural or moral excellencies, is the ready way to bee ſtript of all. *Babylon* that bore her ſelf bold upon her high Towers, thick walls, and twenty years proviſion laid in for a ſiege, was ſurprized by *Cyrus*.

'Twas ſaid of *Caſar*, that hee received not his wounds from the ſwords of enemies, but from the hands of friends, that is, from truſting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, ſlain by truſting to their own underſtanding, their own abilities?

'Twas an excellent ſaying of St. *Auſtin* (*in te ſtas, & non ſtas*) hee that ſtands upon his own ſtrength, ſhall never ſtand. A Creature, if, like a ſingle drop, left to it ſelf, it ſpends and waſtes it ſelf preſently, but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of ſecurity.

Ah! Young men, Young men, if you will needs bee leaning, then lean upon precious Promiſes, 2 Pet. 1. 4. Pſal. 27. 1

les, lean upon the Rock that is higher than your selves, lean upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as *John* did who was the youngest of all the Disciples, and the most beloved of all the Disciples. *John* leaned much, and Christ loved him much. O! lean upon Christs Wisdome for Direction, lean upon his Power for Protection, lean upon (his Purse) his Fulnesse for Provision, lean upon his Eye for Approbation, lean upon his Righteousnesse for Justification, lean upon his blood for Remission, lean upon his Merits for Salvation. As the young Vine without her Wall to support her, will fall and sink: So will you Young men, without Christ puts under his everlasting arms to support you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him; by leaning on him, you will ingage him; by leaning on him, you will gain more honour than you can give; by leaning on him, you may

Joh. 21. 20

Can. 8. 5.

may even command him, and make *him eternally yours*, &c.

3. Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would seek and serue the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your dayes, then take heed of flatterers and flattery.*

Ah! how many young men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by harkening to flatterers, and affecting flattery? Flattery undid young *Rehoboam*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, &c. Flatterers are ſoul-murderers, they are ſoul-undoers, they are like evil Chirurgions, that skin over the wound, but never heal it. 1 King. 12. and ch. 22. Act. 12. 22, 23, 24.

*Anaſtatius* the Emperours motto was (*melleum venenum blanda oratio*) ſmooth talk proves often ſweet Poyſon; Flattery is the very Spring and Mother of all Impiety, it blows the Trumpet, and draws poor ſouls into rebellion againſt God, as *Sheba* drew *Iſrael* to rebel againſt

O *David*;

*David*; it put our first Parents upon tasting the forbidden fruit; it put *Absalon* upon Dethroning of his Father; it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the Jews, it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, upon rebelling against *Moses*; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkneſſe light, and light darkneſſe, &c. it puts perſons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon contemning the means of Grace; it puts men upon abaſing God, ſlighting Chriſt, and vexing the Spirit, it unmans a man, it makes him call black white, and white black; it makes a man change Pearls, for Pebles, and Gold for Counters; it makes a man judge himſelf wiſe, when hee is fooliſh; knowing when he is ignorant; Holy, when hee is Prophane; Free, when hee is a Priſoner; Rich, when hee is Poor; high, when hee is low; full, when hee is empty; happy, when hee is miſerable.

The Flatterers told *Dionyſius*, that his ſpittle was as ſweet as hony. Rev. 3. 17, 18.

ſerable. Ah! Young men, young men, take heed of Flatterers, they are the very worſt of ſinners, they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardened in ſin, and ripened for Hell. God declares ſadly againſt them, and that in his Word, and in his Works; in his Word, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Pſal.* 78. 36. *Pſal.* 36. 1, 2. *Job* 17. 5. *Ezekiel* 12. 24. *Dan.* 11. 21, 32, 34. *Pſal.* 12. 2, 3. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they ſpeak. The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things:* And as God declares ſadly againſt them in his VVord, ſo hee hath declared terribly againſt them in his VVorks, as you may run and read in his judgements executed upon *Ahabs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniels* (Princely) falſe Accuſers, &c. And why then will not you

*Karah* ſignifies any cutting off either by death, or baniſhment, &c.

you stop your ears against those wretches, that the hand and heart of God is so much against?

A Preacher in *Constantines* time presumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face, but hee went away with a check, *Euseb. de vit. Const. l.* 44

Again, As God declares against them, so good men detest them and declare against them, as you may see by comparing these Scriptures together; *Psalm* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Prov.* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Proverbs* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. 1 *Thess.* 2. 5, 20. *Proverbs* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips?* Why so, why, because a man that flattereth his Neighbour, spreadeth a Net for his feet, *Proverbs* 29. 5. The Hebrew word (*Mahhalik* from *hhalak*) that is here rendred *Flatterer*, signifies a *Smooth-boots*, a soft butter-spoken man, because flatterers use smooth, soft speeches. Also the word signifies *to Divide*, because a flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their Nets, and those that give ear to them, will bee taken to their ruine. A lying tongue ha-

hateth those that are afflicted by it, *and a flattering mouth worketh ruine*, *Prov.* 26. *ult.* A flattering mouth ruines name, fame, estate, body, soul, life.

*Valerian* the *Roman* Emperour used to say (*Non acerba, sed blanda*) not bitter, but flattering words doe all the mischief.

When *Alexander* the Great was hit with an Arrow in the siege of an *Indian* City, which would not heal, hee said to his Parasites, you say that I am *Jupiters* Son, but this wound cries, that I am but a man.

Now shall good men detest them, and abhor them as they are the pest of pests, the plague of plagues, and will you own them, will you take pleasure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter? the Lord forbid. O say to all Flatterers, as he to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to doe with you?* Hos. 14 8.

Nay, once more consider, that

The Hebrew word הָחָה *Dahhah*, signifies such a violent forcing of one, as hee cannot stand, it signifies to throw down, to drive on forwards till a man fall into destruction.

not onely the good, but the bad, not only the beſt, but (ſome of) the worſt of men have manifeſted their deteſtation of Flatterers and Flattery.

*Leo* the Emperour uſed to ſay, (*occulti inimici peſſimi*) a cloſe enemy is farre worſe than an open. VVhen a Court paraſite praiſed *Sigiſmund* the Emperour above meaſure, the Emperour gave him a ſound box on the ear.

VVhen *Ariſtobulus* the Hiſtorian preſented to *Alexander* the Great, a Book that hee had written of his glorious acts, wherein hee had flatteringly made him greater than hee was; *Alexander* (after he had read the book) threw it into the River *Hydaſpes*, and ſaid to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

VVhen the Flatterers flattered *Antigonus*, hee cried out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, Hæ virtutes non latent in me*) thou lyeſt, thou lyeſt in thy throat, theſe ver-

rues

tues that thou speakest of, I have not in me; but I am like a Leopard, that have ten black spots to one white.

*Augustus Cæsar*, and *Tiberius Cæsar*, were deadly enemies to Flatterers, insomuch that they would not bee called Lords by their own children.

A good Symbole is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus*, *viz.* (*Nemo amicus idem & adulator*) no Flatterer can be a true friend.

*Aristippus* (the Philosopher) seeing *Diogines* washing of Herbs for his Dinner, said, if *Diogines* knew how to make use of Kings, hee need not live upon raw herbs, as hee doth; to which *Diogines* replied, that if *Aristippus* could content himself with Herbs, hee need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionysius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall God, shall good men, shall bad men detest and declare against Flatterers, and Flattery, and will

not you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea, flye from them, as from a Serpent, and shun them as you would shun Hell it self? if you do not, the very Heathens but now cited, will rise in judgement against you.

Flatterers are the very worst of sinners. The Flatterers told *Cæsar*, that his freckles in his face, were like the Starres in the Firmament; they bought and sold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleasure. And *Augustus* complained when *Varrus* was dead, that hee had none now left that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by Flattery, they will bee like *Harpalus*, who said (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaseth the King, pleaseth mee, when *Astyages* set his own Son before him to feed upon him:

O but let every young man say, (into whose hands this Treatise shall fall) *Quod Deo placet, mihi placet*)

cet) that which pleaſeth God, pleaeth mee.

I have been the longer upon this, out of love to Young mens ſouls, who are ſo apt to bee inſnared in the Flatterers Net; if ever you would bee good in good earneſt, you muſt abhor flatterers as the firſt-born of the Devil, and as ſuch as are moſt pernitious to mens happineſs both here and hereafter.

Whilſt an Aſſe is ſtroaked under the belly, you may lay on his back what burden you pleaſe.

It is reported of one *Oramazes*, that hee had an enchanted Egge, in which (as hee boaſted himſelf) hee had incloſed all the happineſſe of the World, but being broken, nothing was found in it but wind. *Flatterers are the greateſt Cheaters, the greateſt Deceivers in the world.*

They ſay of the *Cracodile*, that when hee hath killed a man, hee will weep over him, as if he were ſorry, and did repent for what hee had done; the Application is eaſie.

4 Di-

## 4 Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and morning of your dayes, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the world.*

The Young man in the Gospel took many a step towards Heaven; *All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* Christ makes a very fair offer to him in the next words, *Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt bee perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow mee*; thou shalt have Heaven for Earth, a Sea for a drop, a Treasure for a mite, a Crown for a Crum. But the Young mans affections were strongly engaged to the things of the world; and therefore hee turnes his back upon Christ, and goes away sorrowful, because hee had great possessions. Oh! the madnesse, the folly of this young man,

Mat. 19. 16--24.

*Multi amando res noxias sunt miseri, habendo misereres.* August. in Psal. 26.

man, who to enjoy a little temporal felicity, hath bid an everlasting farewel to Christ and Glory; in that of *Gen.* 13. 2. it is said that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattel, in Silver, and in Gold; the Hebrew word (*Cabedh*) that is here rendered *Rich*, signifies heavy, it signifies a burthen, to show us, that riches are a heavy burthen, and an hinderance many times to Heaven and happinesse; and this young man in the Gospel found it so to his eternal undoing. Though the load-stone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young mans soul away, when Christ the Pearl of price was present; the World is a silken net, and this young man found it so; the world is like Golden Fetters, and this young man found it so; the world is like sweet Poyson, and this young man found it so; for hee had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his soul

They are *dulce venenum*, a sweet poyson. *Bern.*

soul for Christ or Heaven, for grace or Glory. Some say, that when the Serpent *Scytale* cannot overtake the flying Passenger, shee doth with her beautiful colours so astonish and amaze them, that they have no power to pass away, till she have stung them; such a Serpent the World proved to the young man in the Gospel, it did so affect him and take him, so amaze him, and amuze him, that he could not stir till it stung him to death.

When the Moon is fullest, it is furthest from the Sun; so the more men have of the World, the further (commonly) they are from God; and this the young man in the Gospel made good.

If mony were thrown to the dogs, they would not so much as smell at it, the greater is their folly and madnesse, that will go to hell gates for it

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing, to gain the things of this world, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achans* golden wedge, proved a wedge to cleave him, and his garment, a garment to shrowd him.

The whole world is circular, the

the heart of a man is triangular, and wee know a circle cannot fill a triangle; yea, if it bee not filled with the three persons in Trinity, it will bee filled with the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. The World may bee resembled to the Fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the sight, smooth in handling, sweet in taste, but deadly in effect and operation.

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Ah! Young men, Young men, have none of you found it so?

The world in all its bravery is no better than the Cities which *Salomon* gave to *Hiram*, which hee called *Cabul*, that is to say, displeasing—or dirty; the world will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, surrounded with many Bryers: O the vanity! the uncertainty, the imperfection of all things below! if a man should weigh his pay, and his pains together, his miseries, and his pleasures together, his joyes, and his

1 Kin. 9. 13

his sorrows together, his mercies, and his crosses together, his good dayes, and his bad dayes together, will hee not conclude vanity of vanity, and all is vanity?

In my other Treatises, you may read more of the vanity, insufficiency, impoteney, mutability, uncertainty, and inconstancy of the world, and to them I refer you.

It was a wise and Christian Speech of *Charles* the fifth, to the Duke or *Venice*, who when hee had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradise, instead of Admiring it, or him for it, onely returned him this grave and serious *memento*, (*Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) these are the things which make us unwilling to dye; it was a good saying of one to a great Lord (upon his shewing him his stately House, and pleasant Gardens;) Sir, you had need make sure of Heaven, or else when you dye, you will bee a very great loser.

Ah! Young men, young men, 'tis onely Heaven that is above all winds, storms, and tempests, nor hath God cast man out of Paradise, for

for him to think to finde out another Paradiſe in this world; the main reaſon, why many young men dote upon the world, is, becauſe they are not acquainted with a greater Glory: Men ate Acorns, till they were acquainted with the uſe of VVheat. The woman had the Moon under her feet, when ſhee was cloathed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve ſtars upon her head. Rev. 12. 1.

Ah! Young men, were you but Cloathed with the Sun of Righteouſneſſe, and had you a Crown ſet upon your heads, by the hand of Faith, you would have all the things of this World, which are as low, beſpotted, and mutable, as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would bee good betimes, ſit looſe from' the things of this world, bee no longer worſhipers of this golden Calf, and never let the World, that ſhould bee but your ſervant, become your Lord; Oh let not the Devil and the world, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27, 35. ch. 10. 34.

have

have more service for an ounce of gold, than Christ shall have for the Kingdome of Heaven!

Mat. 6.14. Ah young men! the World and you must part, or Christ and you will never meet; *you cannot serve God and Mammon.* The two Poles shall sooner meet, than the love of Christ, and the love of the World.

## 5 Direction.

Gal. 1.15, 16. Fifthly, *If you would bee good betimes, if you would know, seek, and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your youth, then take heed betimes of carnal reason, take heed of consulting with flesh and blood.*

*Cicero*, a Heathen, could say, that man would not bee so wicked, and do so wickedly, were it not for his reason.

Many a hopeful young man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally, by hearkening to those evil counsellours.

*Carnal reason is an enemy*, yea, an utter enemy, nay, it is not onely an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea, enmities, *Rom.* 8. 7. An enemy may bee reconciled, but enmity

enmity can never bee reconciled. Carnal Reason is not onely averse, but it is utterly averse to all goodness, it builds strong holds and syllogisms against the most glorious Gospel-truths, and accounts the precious things of Christ as a strange thing; carnal Reason will make God and Gospel do homage to it; when carnal Reason is in the Throne, Christ and his truths must all bow, or bee judged before it's bar.

Ah! Young men, young men, as ever you would bee good betimes, stop your ears against all carnal Reasonings within you; carnal Reason judges the choicest things of the Gospel to bee meer foolishnesse, it is purblinde, and cannot see how to make a right judgement of Christ, his VVord, his wayes, and yet will controul all. 1 Cor. 1. 25.

If you are resolved to bee still schollars to this Master, then you must resolve to bee unhappy here, and miserable hereafter. But

It is safer and better for you to imitate those young men, who in the morning of their dayes have graciously, wisely, and resolutely withstood those evil Counsellours; Carnal Reason, Flesh, and Blood, *Joseph* and *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meshach*, and *Abednego*, all these in the Prime-rose of their youth were good, at turning the deaf ear to carnal counsel, and carnal Counsellours.

Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. Dan. 1.

*Cassianus* reports of a young man that had given himself up to a Christian life, and his Parents misliking that way, they wrote letters to him to perswade him from it; and when hee knew there were letters come from them, he would not open them, but threw them into the fire; this example is worth a following.

Another famous example you have in the story of King *Edward* the sixth, when *Cranmar* and *Ridley* came to him, and were very earnest to have him give way to his Sister, the Lady *Mary* to have

have Maſſe; hee ſtood out and pleaded the caſe with them, that it was a ſin againſt God, and provoking to the eyes of his glory, &c. but they ſtill continued to uſe many carnal Arguments to perſwade the King (who was but a childe about fifteen years of age) but hee withſtood them a great while, but at length, when hee ſaw hee could not prevail with all his pleading againſt thoſe grave men, but that they ſtill continued their ſuit, hee burſt out into bitter weeping, and ſobbing, deſiring them to deſiſt; the motioners ſeeing his zeal and conſtancy, wept as faſt as hee, and being overcome, they went away, and told one, that the King had more divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies.

Ah! young men, it will be your ſafety, and your glory, to write after this Princely Copy, when you are ſurrounded with carnal reaſon, and carnal counſellours, &c.

### 6 Direction.

Sixthly, and Lastly, *If you would bee good betimes, then take heed of comparing your selves with those that are worse than your selves.*

Joh. 9. 39, 40.

Young men are very apt to compare themselves with those that are worse than themselves, and this proves a snare unto them, yea, oftentimes their bane, their ruine; As it did the young Pharisee in the Gospel, who pleaded his Negative Righteousnesse, hee was not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, and stood on his comparative goodnesse, nor as this Publican, hee stands not onely upon his Comparisons, but upon his disparisons, being blinde at home, and too quick sighted abroad; hee contemneth and condemned the poor Publican, who was better than himself, makeing good that saying of *Seneca*, the nature of man, saith hee, is very apt (*utimur perspicilis magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to behold

Luk. 18. 11 12, 13, 14.

*Thales*, one of the seven Sages, being asked what was the easiest thing in the world to do, answered, to know other mens faults, and none of our own.

hold other mens faults, rather than Looking-glaſſes to behold our own; ſuch Phariſees do juſtly incur the cenſure which that ſowre Philoſopher paſt upon Grammarians, that they were better acquainted with the evil of *Ulyſſes*, than with their own.

*Diogenes apud Laertium l. 6.*

Ah! Young man, young man, you know, hee that drinks poyſon, though hee drinks not ſo much as another; and hee that commits treaſon, though not ſo great, ſo high treaſon as another, ſhall yet as certainly bee poyſoned, and hanged, as hee that hath drunk a greater quantity of poyſon, and committed higher acts of treaſon.

Mat. 11. 22, 23, 24, 25. As in Heaven, one is more glorious than another, ſo in Hel, one ſhall bee more miſerable than another. *Aug.*

Sirs, doe not delude and befool your own ſouls, if you are not as wicked as others, you ſhall not bee as much tormented as others, but yet you ſhall bee as certainly damned as others, you ſhall as certainly to Hell as others, you ſhall as ſure bee ſhut out for ever from God, Chriſt, Saints, Angels, and all the Treaſures,

pleasures, and glories of Heaven, as others, except it bee prevented, by timely repentance on your side, and pardoning mercy on Gods.

VVilt thou count it madnesse, O young man! in him that is sick, to reason thus? I am not so sick, as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Physician; And in the wounded man to say, I am not so desperately wounded as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Chirurgion; and in the traitor to say, I am not guilty of so many foul and hainous treasons as such and such, and therefore I will not look after a pardon; and in the necessitous man to say, I am not so hard put to it as such and such, and therefore I will not welcome a hand of charity? and wilt thou not count it the greatest madnesse in the World for thee to put off thy repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the spring and morning of thy youth, because that thou art not as sinful,

as

as wicked as such and such; if to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in Hell, than others, will satisfie thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dyes, and of the fire that never goes out; being like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled, could not bee quenched; O then begin to bee good betimes! O seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes!

To think often of Hell, is the way to bee preserved from falling into Hell. Ah! young men, young men, that you would often consider of the bitternesse of the damneds torments, and of the pittilesnesse of their torments, and of the diversity of their torments, and of the easelesnes of their torments, and of the remedilesnesse of their torments. (*Momentaneum est quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat.*) The Sinners delight here is momentany, that which torments hereafter is perpetual; when a

*Chrysost.* Hom. 44. in Mat.

Sinner is in Hell, dost thou think, O Young man! that another Christ shall bee found to dye for him, or that the same Christ will bee crucified again for him, or that another Gospel should be preached to him? Surely no.

Ah! Why then wilt thou not betimes return and seek out after the things that belong to thy everlasting peace? I have read of Pope *Clement* the fifth, that when a young Nephew of his died, hee sent his Chaplain to a Necromancer, to know of him how it fared with him in the other world, the Conjurer shewed him to the Chaplain, lying in a fiery bed in Hell, which when the Pope understood, he never joyed more, &c.

*Jac. Rev. Hist. Pont. Rom.* 199.

Ah! Young man, that these occasional hints of Hell, may bee a means to preserve thee from lying in those everlasting flames.

*Bellarmine* tells us of a certain Advocate of the Court of *Rome*, that

that being at the point of Death, was ſtirred up by them that ſtood by, to repent and call upon God for mercy, hee with a conſtant countenanee, and without ſign of fear, turned his ſpeech to God, and ſaid, Lord, I have a deſire to ſpeak unto thee, not for my ſelf, but for my Wife and Children, for I am haſtening to Hell, neither is there any thing that thou ſhouldeſt doe for mee; and this hee ſpake, ſaith *Bellarmine* (who was preſent, and heard it) as if hee had ſpoken of a journey to ſome Village or Town, and was no more affrighted. *Bellar. de arte moriendi, l. 2. c. 10.*

Sir *Francis Bacon* alſo in his Hiſtory of *Henry* the ſeventh, relates, how it was a common by-word of the Lord *Cordes*, that hee would be content to lye ſeven years in hell ſo hee might win *Calice* from the *Engliſh*; but if thou O young man! art given up to ſuch deſperate Atheiſm, and carnal Apprehenſions of Hell, I am afraid God will confute thee one day by fire and brimſtone; but I would willingly hope

hope better things of all those young persons into whose hands this treatise shall fall; and thus you see what things must be declined and avoided; if ever you would be good betimes, if ever you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes.

## CHAP. VII.

BUt in the second place, *as those things must bee declined, so other things must carefully and diligently bee practised, if ever you would be good betimes.* I shall instance only in those that are most considerable and weighty; As,

First, *If ever you would bee good betimes, &c. then you must labour to bee acquainted with four things betimes.*

### 1 Duty.

First, *You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scripture betimes*, you must study the Word betimes; *David* studied the Word in

in the morning of his dayes, in the prime-rose of his Youth, and this made him wiser than his enemies, yea, than his teachers; this made him as much excel the antients, as the Sun excels the Moon, or as the Moon excels the twinckling Stars. *Timothy* was good betimes, and no wonder, for in the prime-rose of his dayes, hee was acquainted with the Scripture, hee was inured to the Word from his childe-hood, yea, from his infancy, as the Word properly signifies; so in that 119. *Psalm*, the 9. verse, *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed according to thy Word*; there is no way to a holy heart, and a clean life, but by acquainting of your selves with the Word betimes; one hath long since observed; that God hath bowed down the Scriptures to the capacity even of babes and sucklings, that all excuse may bee taken away, and that Young men may bee encouraged to study the Scrip-

Psal. 119. 97,98,99. 100,101, 102,103.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

ἀπὸ βρέφους. from a suckling.

*Aug.*

*Adoro Plenitudinem Scripturarum. Tertullian.*

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Histories are comparable to the Histories of the Scriptures. 1. For Antiquity. 2. Rarity. 3. Variety. 4. Brevity. 5. Perspicuity. 6. Harmony. 7. Verity, All other Books cannot equal Gods, either in age, or authority, in dignity, or excellency, in sufficiency, or glory.

*Moses* is found more antient and more honourable, than all those whom the *Grecians* make most antient and honourable, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

*Gregory* calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and soul of God.

The whole Scripture is but one entire Love-Letter, dispatcht from the Lord Christ to his beloved Spouse, and who then but would still bee a reading in this Love-Letter? Like *Cæcilia* a *Roman* Maiden of Noble Parentage, who carried alwaies about her the New Testament, that shee might

might still bee a reading in Christs Love-letter, and behold the sweet workings of his love, and heart, towards his dear and precious ones.

*Luther* found so much sweetness in the word, in Christs Love-letter, that made him say, he would not live in Paradise if hee might, without the Word (*at cum verbo etiam in inferno facile est vivere*) but with the Word hee could live in Hell it self.

The Word is like the stone *Garumantides*, that hath drops of Gold in it self, enriching of the beleeving soul. This the Martyrs found, which made them willing to give a load of hay for a few leaves of the Bible in *English*.

St. *Augustine* professeth, that the sacred Scriptures were his whole delight.

And St. *Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianus*, who by long and assiduous meditation on the holy Scriptures, had made his breast the Library of Jesus Christ. *Hier. Epistola ad Heliod. in Epitaphium Nepotiani.*

And

And *Rabbi Chiia* in the *Jerusalem Talmud*, saith, that in his account, all the world is not of equal value with one word out of the Law. That which a Papist reports lyingly of their Sacrament of the Masse, *viz.* that there are as many mysteries in it, as there bee drops in the Sea, dust on the Earth, Angels in Heaven, Stars in the Sky, Atomes in the Sun-beams, or sands on the Sea-shore, &c. may bee truly asserted of the holy Scriptures.

Oh the mysteries, the excellencies, the glories, that are in the word! Ah, no book to this book, none so useful, none so needful, none so delightful, none so necessary to make you happy, and to keep you happy as this. It is said of *Cæsar* (*major fuit cura Cæsari libellorum, quam purpuræ*) that hee had greater care of his books, than of his Royal Robes, for swimming thorow the waters to escape his enemies, hee carried his books in his hand above the

waters

waters, but lost his Robes; now what are *Cæsars* books to Gods books?

Ah! young men, young men, the Word of the Lord is a light to guide you; a Counsellour, to counsel you; a comforter, to comfort you; a staff, to support you; a sword, to defend you; and a Physician, to cure you; the word is a Mine to enrich you; a Robe, to cloath you; and a Crown, to crown you; it is Bread, to strengthen you; and Wine, to cheer you; and a Hony-comb, to feast you; and Musick, to delight you; and a Paradise to entertain you. Psal. 119.

Oh! Therefore before all, and above all, search the Scripture, study the Scripture, dwell on the Scripture, delight in the Scripture, treasure up the Scripture, no Wisdome, to Scripture VVildome; no Knowledge, to Scripture Knowledge, no Experience, to Scripture Experience; no Comforts, to Scripture Comforts; no De-

The Jewish Rabbins were wont to say, that upon every letter of the law, there hangs mountains of profitable matter.

Delights, to Scripture Delights; no Convictions, to Scripture Convictions; nor no Conversion, to Scripture Conversion.

*Tolle & lege.*

St. *Augustin* hearing a voice from Heaven, that bade him take and read, whereupon turning open the New Testament, hee fell upon that place, *Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkennesse, not in chambering and wantonnesse, not in strife and envying. But put yee on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* This Scripture so sunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his conversion as himself reports; this St. *Augustin* as hee was once preaching, his memory failing of him, contrary to his purpose, hee fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a Scripture, or two, not before thought of; to confute their Heresies, hee converted *Firmus* a *Manichean*, as hee after acknowledged to *Augustin*, blessing God for that Sermon.

Rom. 13. 13, 14.

Lib. 8 confes. cap. 11

*Possidon de vita. Augustin.*

It

It is reported of one *Adrianus*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the Cause of God, hee asked, what was that which caused them to suffer such things? and one of them named that Text; *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; And this Text was set home, with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not only to profess it, but to dye a Martyr for it. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

St. *Cyprian* was converted by reading the Prophecy of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted, by reading the first Chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading that Scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self, &c?* Rom. 2. 21

Wee read that *Paphnutius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two famous

mous strumpets, from uncleanesse, only with this Scripture-Argument, *That God seeth all things in the dark, when the Doors are fast, the Windows shut, the Curtains drawn.*

Heb. 4. 13.

I have read of a poor man, who perswaded a young scholar to leave reading of Poetry; &c. and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly hee did; and it pleased the Lord, before hee had read out *Genesis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Prime-rose of his dayes, hee being then but twenty years of age.

*Origen* was her Schoolmaster.

I have read of a young Lady, called *Potamia*, of a very illustrious Family, who endured very much in her Martyrdome, by the extream cruelty of *Basilides* her executioner: yet after her death, hee bethinking himself of the holy words, and Scripture-expressions that were uttered by her, during her cruel Torments, became a Christian, and within few

few dayes after, was himself likewise Crowned with Martyrdome.

*James Andreas*, a godly Minister, hearing of a Jew, that for Theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not seen that kinde of punishment, hee went to the place where hee was hanging between two Doggs that were alwayes snatching at him to eat his flesh; the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew some verses of the *Psalmes*, wherein hee cryed to God for mercy; whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and instructed him in the Principles of Christian Religion, about Christ the *Messiah*, &c. exhorting him to beleeve in him, and it pleased God so to blesse his Scripture Exhortations to him, that the Doggs gave over tearing of his flesh, and the poor Jew desired him to procure, that hee might bee taken down and baptized, and hung by the neck for the quicker dispatch

A Miracle of mercy.

patch, which was done accordingly.

I might produce other instances, but let these suffice to provoke all young persons to a speedy, serious, diligent, and constant study of the Scripture. Ah Sirs! you do not know how soon your blinde mindes may bee enlightned, your hard hearts softned, your proud spirits humbled, your sinful natures changed, your defiled Consciences purged, your distempered affections regulated, and your poor Souls saved, by searching into the Scriptures; by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you should lay up the Mannah of Gods Word in your hearts, as *Moses* laid up the Mannah in the golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the staff and signet that shee received from *Judah*, shee laid them up till shee came to save her life, and did save her life by it, as you may see in holy story.

Much in the Word is wrap'd up in a little. It is more to bee admired, than to have *Homers* Illiads comprized in a Nut shel. Heb. 9. 4.

Gen. 38. 18---36.

The

The laying up of the Word now, may bee the saving of your souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they goe out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb, or gravel with them, that they may be ballances, and not carried away with the wind.

Ah! Young men, young men, you had need to have your thoughts and hearts ballanced with the precious Word, that you may not bee carried away with every wind of doctrine, as many have been in these dayes, to their destruction and confusion.

*Narcissus* a beautiful Youth, though hee would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! how many Young men in these dayes, who were once lovely and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high, empty, aiery notions, and with strange monstrous speculations to their own dammation? 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Holy *Melancthon*, being newly converted, thought it impossible for his Hearers to withstand the evidence of the Gospel; but soon after, hee complained that old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancthon*.

Ah! young men, young men, if you doe not in good earnest give up your selves to the reading, to the studying, to the pondering, to the beleeving, to the affecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will bee too hard for you, the World will bee too hard for you, your Lusts will bee too hard for you, Temptations will bee too hard for you, and Deceivers will bee too hard for you, and in the end you will bee miserable; and thus much for the first thing, &c.

2 Duty.

Secondly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you must acquaint your*

*your selves with your selves betimes.*

If you would bee gracious in the spring and morning of your dayes, then you must see betimes how bad you are, how vile, how sinful, how wretched you are; no man beginnes to bee good, till hee sees himself to bee bad; the young Prodigal never began to amend, hee never thought of returning to his Father, till hee came to himself, till hee began to return into his own soul, and saw himself in an undone condition. Luke 15. 12---22.

Ah! Young men, Young men, you must see your selves *To bee children of Wrath, to bee Enemies, to bee Strangers, to bee afarre off from God, from Christ, from the Covenant, from Heaven, to bee Sins servants, and Satans bond slaves*; the ready way to bee found, is to see your selves lost; the first step to mercy, is to see your misery; the first step towards Heaven, is to see your selves neer to Hell; you won't look af- Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13. Rom. 6. 16 Joh. 8. 44. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

ter the Physitian of souls, you won't prize the Physician of souls, you won't desire the Physician of souls, you won't match with the Physician of souls, you won't fall in love, in league with the Physician of souls, you won't resign up your selves to the Physician of souls, till you come to see your Wounds, till you come to feel your Diseases, till you see the Tokens, the Plague-sores of Divine wrath and displeasure upon you; as the whole do not need the Physician, so they do not desire, they do not care for the Physician.

*Austin* saith, hee would willingly go thorow Hell to Christ, so will all that see their need of Christ.

Ah! Young men, as you would bee good betimes, begin to acquaint your selves with your sinful selves betimes, beginne to acquaint your selves betimes with your Natural and undone condition.

*Zanche* writ a Tractat. *Quod nihil scitur.*

There is a three-fold self.

1 There is a Natural self, as a mans parts, wit, reason, will, Affecti-

Affections, and Inclinations, &c.

2 A Religious ſelf, and ſo a mans duties, graces, obedience, righteouſneſs, holineſſe, are called ones ſelf.

3 There is a ſinful ſelf, and ſo a mans corruptions, luſts, ſinful nature and diſpoſitions are called ones ſelf; now if ever you would bee good betimes, you muſt acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes.

*Luther* ſaid, that if a man could perfectly ſee his own faults, the ſight ther-of would bee a very hell unto him.

*Demonicus* being asked at what time hee began to bee a Philoſopher: Anſwered, when I began to know my ſelf. So a man never beginnes to bee a Chriſtian, till hee begins to know himſelf. And indeed, for a man to know himſelf, to acquaint himſelf with himſelf, is one of the hardeſt works in all the World. For as the Eye can ſee all things but it ſelf, ſo moſt can diſcerne all faults but their owne. *Henry* the Fourth Emperour of *Germany*, his uſual ſpeech was (*Multi multa ſciunt*,

*sciunt, se autem nemo)* many know much, but few know themselves.

The very Heathens did admire that saying as an Oracle *(nosce teipsum)* know and bee acquainted with thy own self. The main exhortation of *Chilo*, one of the seven Sages, was, know thy self; And *Plato* recordeth, that this saying of *Chilo*, know thy self, was written in Letters of Gold, upon the Portal of *Apolloes* Temple.

*Juvenal* saith, that this saying, Know thy self, came from Heaven. *Macrobius* saith, that the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what course should bee taken for attaining to felicity? answered, Only teach a man to know himself.

Thus you see, that both Divinity and Philosophy doth agree in this, that the best and surest way to true felicity, is, to know our selves, to acquaint our selves with our selves.

This

This Duty the Apostle charges upon the *Ephesians*, *Remember, that you, being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time you were without Christ, aliens from the Common-wealth of* Israel, *and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*

Eph. 2. 11, 12. Of dull and insensible men, one long since thus complained (*patientius ferre Christi jacturam, quam suam*) that they did more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ, than those that were done unto themselves O the plague of unsensibleness!

Here are five withouts, *without Christ, without the Church, without the Promise, without Hope, and without God in the world.*

Man in his Natural state is afar off, (hee is without) three manner of wayes.

1 In point of opinion and apprehension.

2 In point of fellowship and communion.

3 In point of grace and conversion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes; Ah! such is the corruption of our Nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or wet-

wet Wood, with hiſſing; propound any evil, then it is like fire to ſtraw, it is like the fooliſh Satyre, that made haſte to kiſs the fire; it is like that unctuous matter, which the Naturaliſts ſay, ſucks and ſnatches the fire to it, with which it is conſumed; till you come to bee ſenſible of this, you will never begin to bee good, you will never looke to have your hearts changed, and your ſouls ſaved.

The *Æthiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their owne complexion, and they ſay, that if the bruite Creatures could draw a picture of the Divine Nature, they would make their ſhape the Copy, and thus they flatter and delude themſelves; take heed Young men, take heed, that you do not put the like cheats upon your own ſouls, take heed that you bee not like thoſe Limners, who ſo as they can make a mans Picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it

ſo

so as to resemble him. It is safest and best O Young man! to know the worst of thy self, and to know thy self, as thou art in thy self, and not as thy own flattering heart, or as other flatterers may represent thee to thy self.

### 3 Duty.

Thirdly, If you would bee good betimes, then *you must acquaint your selves with Jesus Christ betimes.*

You must know him betimes; A man never begins to bee good, till hee begins to know him that is the fountain of all goodness; *This is life eternal, to know thee, the onely true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Joh. 17. 3.

The knowledge of Christ, is the beginning of eternal life, it is the way to eternal life, it is a taste of eternal life, it is a sure pledge and pawn to the soul of eternal life.

The *Spaniards* say of *Aquinas*, that hee that knowes not him, knowes not any thing, but hee that

that knows him, knows all things: hee that knows Jesus Christ, not notionally onely, but practically, not apprehensively onely, but affectively; hee knows all things that may make him happy; but he that knows not Jesus Christ, knows nothing that will stand him in stead, when hee shall lye upon a dying bed, and stand before a Judgment Seat.

*Justin Martyr* relates, that when in his discourse with *Tryphon*, hee mentioned the knowledge of Christ, as conducing to our happiness and perfection, *Tryphons* friends laughed at it, but I hope better things of all those, into whose hands this treatise shall fall.

Sirs, the Sun is not more necessary to the World; the Eye to the Body, the Pilot to the Ship, the General to the Army, &c. than the knowledge of Christ betimes, is necessary for all those that would bee good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would bee good betimes, *you must labour*

bour, even as for life, *to know and bee thorowly acquainted with these six things*, concerning Jesus Christ, betimes.

First, If you would be good betimes, then *you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may incourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to beleeve on him, and to marry with him.* *Nec Christus, nec cœlum, patitur hyperbolen.*

If you look upon his names, his natures, his offices, his graces, his dignities, his excellencies, his royalties, his glories, his fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? why Christ hath tryed Gold to enrich you; are you naked? Christ hath white raiment to cloathe you; are you spiritually blinde? Christ hath eye-salve to enlighten you; are you in straights? hee hath wisdome to Counsel you; are you unrighteous? hee will bee righteousnesse to you; are you unholy? hee will bee holinesse and sanctification to you; are you hungry? Rev. 3 18. 1 Cor. 1. 30

that knows him, knows all things: hee that knows Jesus Christ, not notionally onely, but practically, not apprehensively onely, but affectively, hee knows all things that may make him happy; but he that knows not Jesus Christ, knows nothing that will stand him in stead, when hee shall lye upon a dying bed, and stand before a Judgment Seat.

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*bour*

*bour*, even as for life, *to know and bee thorowly acquainted with these six things*, concerning Jesus Christ, betimes.

First, If you would be good betimes, then *you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may incourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to beleeve on him, and to marry with him.* *Nec Christus, nec cœlum, patitur hyperbolen.*

If you look upon his names, his natures, his offices, his graces, his dignities, his excellencies, his royalties, his glories, his fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? why Christ hath tryed Gold to enrich you; are you naked? Christ hath white raiment to cloathe you; are you spiritually blinde? Christ hath eye-salve to enlighten you; are you in straights? hee hath wisdome to Counsel you; are you unrighteous? hee will bee righteousnesse to you; are you unholy? hee will bee holinesse and sanctification to you; are you hungry? Rev. 3 18. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Joh. 6. 48. Isa. 55. 1. Mat. 11. 28 Mat. 9. 12.

gry? hee is bread to feed you; are you thirsty? hee is Wine and Milk to satisfie you; are you weary? he is a Bed, a Seat, to rest you; are you sick? why hee is a Physician to cure you, &c. (*Omne bonum in summo bono*) all good is in the chiefest good.

The Creatures have their particular goodnesse; health hath its particular goodnesse, and wealth hath its particular goodnesse, and learning hath its, and the favour of the Creature hath its, &c. but now Jesus Christ hee is an universal good, all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole volume of perfections, which is spread through Heaven and Earth, is epitomized in him, *Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, qui in ipso uno bono, bona sunt omnia. Aug.* One Christ will bee to thee instead of all things else, because in him are all good things to bee found. *Abrahams* servant brought forth Jewels

Christ is the *Bonum in quo omnia bona.*

els of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, to win *Rebeccha's* heart to *Isaac*; so should you, O young men! bee often in presenting to your owne view, all those amiable and excellent things that bee in Christ to win your hearts over to Christ betimes. Gen. 24. 53

Secondly, If you would bee good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that Jesus Christ is mighty to save.* Heb. 7. 25. εἰς τὸ παντελὲς. Perpetually. Constantly. Mat. 9 28. Isa. 63. 1. Mighty to save.

Hee is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto him, that beleeve in him, and that cast themselves upon him. The Lord hath laid help upon one that is mighty, Christ saves perfectly, thorowly, perpetually, them that come unto him.

The three Tongues that were written upon the Cross, in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, to witnesse Christ to bee the King of the *Jewes*, doe each of them in their several Ideoms avouch this Axiome, that Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour; and a three-

fold cord is not easily broken. They say it is true of the Oyl at *Rhemes*, that though it bee continually spent in the auguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never wasteth; Christ is that pot of Mannah, that cruse of Oyle, that bottomlesse Ocean, that never fails his people; there is in Christ an all-sufficiency, for all Creatures, at all times, in all places.

Christ is never *vacuis manibus*, empty-handed.

The great *Cham* is said to have a Tree full of Pearls hanging by clusters, but what is the Great *Chams* Tree, to Christ our Tree of Life, who hath all variety and plenty of all fruit upon him; the happinesse that comes to beleevers by Christ are so many, that they cannot bee numbred; so great, that they cannot bee measured, so copious, that they cannot be defined, so precious, that they cannot bee valued; all which speaks out the fulnesse and all-sufficiency of Christ.

Rev. 22.2. Christ is like the trees of the sanctuary, which were both for meat, and for medicine. Ezek. 47. 12.

There is in Christ (*plenitudo abun-*

*bundantia*, and *plenitudo redundantiæ*) a fulneſs of abundance, and a fulneſs of redundancy, as well as a fulneſſe of ſufficiency.

There is in Chriſt,

1 The fulneſſe of the Spirit.

2 The fulneſſe of Grace.

3 The fulneſſe of the Image of God.

4 The fulneſſe of the God-head.

5 The fulneſſe of Glory.

But I muſt not now open, nor dilate on theſe things, leſt I ſhould tire both my ſelf, and the Reader.

*Plutarch* in the Life of *Phocion*, tells us of a certaine Gentlewoman of *Ionia*, who ſhewed the Wife of *Phocion*, all the rich Jewels, and precious Stones ſhee had; ſhee anſwered her again, all my riches and Jewels is my Husband *Phocion*; ſo may a penitent Sinner ſay of his bleſſed Saviour, Chriſt is all my Jewels, my Riches, my Treaſures, my Pleaſures, &c. his ſufficiency is all theſe, and

more than these to mee.

The *Spanish* Ambassadour comming to see the Treasury of Saint *Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cryed up thorow-out the World, fell a groping to finde whether it had any bottome, and being asked why, answered, In this amongst other things, my great Masters Treasure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottome, as I finde yours to have, alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potosy*; but what are the *Spaniards* Treasures to Christs Treasures? a man may without much groping finde the bottome of all earthly Treasures, but who can finde the bottome of Christs Treasures? should all created excellencies meet in one glorified breast, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like Creature to sound the bottome of those riches and treasures which are in Christ, *Ephes.* 3. 8. All which speaks out Christs all-sufficiency; and thus much for the second thing.

*Ipse Deus sufficit ad præmium.* Bern.

Third-

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, then *you must know betimes, that there is a marvellous willingnesse and readinesse in Christ, to embrace, to entertain, to welcome returning Sinners, and to shew mercy and favour to them.*

The Young Prodigal did but think of returning to his Father, and hee ran and met him, and instead of kicking or killing him, hee kist him, and embrac'd him, his bowels rolled within him, and his compassions flowed out freely to him. *Ho every one that thirsteth, come yee to the Waters, and hee that hath no money, come yee, buy, and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk, without money and without price.* *Nazianzen* improveth this place thus; On this easie way of contract, hee giveth more willingly than others sell, if thou wilt but accept, that is all the price; though you have no merits; though you have nothing in your selves to incourage you, yet will you accept? I

Luke 15. 20, 21, 22.

Isa. 55. 1. The meaning is, sell thy self, thine own wit, reason, self-worth, and that is all Christ desires, saith *Augustin* upon the words.

you will, all is freely yours; the Waters shall bee yours, to cleanse you, and the Milk yours, to nourish you, and the bread yours, to strengthen you, and the Wine yours, to comfort you; here poor Sinners are called three times to come; come saith Christ, come come, to shew how marvellous ready, and willing hee is, that poor sinners should taste of Gospel delicates, so in that *John* 7. 37. *Jesus stood and cryed, if any man thirst, let him come to mee and drink.* So in that *Rev.* 22. 17. *Let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely*; so in that *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voyce, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and hee with mee*; and so in that *Luke* 14. 21. *The Master of the House said to his Servant, goe out quickly into the Streets, and Lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the*

Cant. 2. 8 Christ comes leaping upon the Mountains and skipping upon the hills, to shew his readiness and willingness to do good to souls.

*the blinde.* Here is no man of quality, of dignity, of worldly Pomp or Glory, or of any self-sufficiency, that is invited to the feast, but a company of poor ragged, deformed, slighted, neglected, impoverished, wounded Sinners; these are invited to feast with Christ.

Concerning this willingnesse of Christ, I shall speak more when I come to deal with Old Sinners, in the cloze of this discourse, and to that I referre you, for further and fuller satisfaction, concerning the great readinesse and willingness of Jesus Christ to entertain returning Sinners.

Fourthly, If you would bee good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that Jesus Christ is designed, sealed, and appointed by the Father, to the office of a Mediatour.*

Joh. 6.27. The Father sealed, even God, so the Greek hath it.

*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the*

*Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed*: God the Father hath made Christs commission authentical, as men doe theirs by their seal. It is a Metaphor, a Simile taken from them who give Commissions under hand and seal. God the Father hath given it under his hand and seal, That Jesus Christ is the only person that hee hath appointed, and sealed, allowed, and confirmed to the Office of our Redemption. If Jesus Christ were never so able to save, and never so willing, and ready to save poor Sinners, yet if hee were not appointed, designed, and sealed, for that work, the awakened Sinner would never look out after him, nor desire union with him, nor interest in him; and therefore it is of very great consequence to know, that God the Father hath sent and sealed Christ to bee a Saviour to his people, him hath God the Father sealed; Sealed by way of destination, and sealed by way of

of qualification, ſealed by his Doctrine, ſealed by his Miracles, ſealed by his Baptiſme, ſealed by his Reſurrection, but above all, ſealed by his glorious Unction. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon mee, becauſe the Lord hath annointed mee to preach good tydings unto the meek; hee hath ſent mee to binde up the broken-hearted, to proclaime liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound.* To proclaime the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the Oyle of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſſe, that they might bee called trees of Righteouſneſſe, the planting of the Lord, that hee might bee glorified; neither Saints, nor Angels, are ſealed and annointed to the great Work of Redemption, but the Lord Jeſus is; you ſhould alwayes look upon the Lord

Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3. Luk. 4. 18. Chriſt was annointed of God, 1 By way of deſignation. 2 By way of qualification 3 By way of inauguration This annointing was ordinarily uſed in the inſtalling men to offices of any eminence.

Lord Jesus as sealed and anointed to the office of a Mediatour, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord! It is thy office, as thou art a sealed and an anointed Saviour and Redeemer, to subdue my sinnes, to change my nature, to sanctifie my heart, to reforme my Life, and to save my soul; and therefore doe it for thy names sake; O doe it for thy Offices sake, doe it for thy glories sake!

Thou art annointed with the
Psa. 45. 8. Oyle of gladnesse above thy fel-
Acts 4. 27. lows; Thou hast a larger effusion of the Spirit upon thee, than others; thou art annointed with the Holy Ghost, and with
Acts 10. 8. power after an extraordinary measure and manner; thou art indued with all Heroical Gifts and Excellencies, plentifully, abundantly, transcendently, thou art sealed and predestinated; thou art
Joh. 1. 16. Joh. 3. 34. invested into this office of Mediatorship under the Fathers hand and

and seal; and therefore whither should I go for salvation, for remission, for redemption, for grace, for glory, but to thee?

Fifthly, If you would bee good betimes, *then you must know betimes, that there is no way to salvation, but by Jesus Christ.*

Neither is there salvation in any other (speaking of Christ) for there is none other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby wee must bee saved; if ever you are saved, you must bee saved by him, and him only, you must not look for another Saviour, nor you must not look for a Co-saviour, you must bee saved wholly by Christ, and onely by Christ, or you shall never bee saved; you must cry out, as *Lambert* did (when he was in the fire, and lifted up his hands, and fingers ends flaming) none but Christ, none but Christ. When *Augustus Cæsar* desired the Senate to joyn two Consuls with him for the better Government of the State, the

Act. 4. 12. ἐν ἄλλῳ. that is, by or through the mediation of any other.

Act. and Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate answered, that they held it as a diminution of his dignity, and a disparagement of their own judgement, to joyn any with so incomparable a man as *Augustus*.

Ah Friends! It is a diminution of Christs dignity, sufficiency, and glory, in the businesse of your Salvation, to joyne any thing with the Lord Jesus, and it is the greatest disparagement in the world to your own judgements, knowledge, prudence, and wisdome, to yoak any with Christ in the work of Redemption, in the businesse of Salvation.

St. *Augustin* saith, that *Marcellina* hung Christs Picture, and the Picture of *Pithagoras* together; many there are, not onely in *Rome*, but in *England* (yea, I am afraid in *London*) who joyn Christ and their Works together, Christ and their Prayers together, Christ and their Teachers together, Christ and their mournings together

gether, Christ and their hearings together, Christ and their Alms together.

Ah! what a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour doth these men make Jesus Christ to bee? Except these men come off from these things, and come up onely to Jesus Christ, in the great businesse of Salvation, they will as certainly, and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, God commands them, not to wear a Garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and Linnen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee. Deut. 22. 11. ch. 29. v. 19.

This Law was Figurative, and shews us, that in the case of our Justification, Acceptation, and Salvation, wee are not to joyne our Works, our Services, with the

Phil. 3. 9, 10. Rev. 19. 8. Gal. 3. 28. c. 2. 16.

the Righteousnesse of Christ; God abhors a linsie-woolsie righteousnesse. And as by the Letter of this Law, in the Hebrews account, one threed of wool in a Linner garment, or one Linnen threed in a woollen Garment, made it unlawful; So the least manner of mixture in the businesse of Justification, makes all null and void. And if by Grace, then it is no more of Works; otherwise grace is no more grace: But if it bee of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work: hee that shall mixe his Righteousnesse with Christs, he that shall mix his puddle with Christs purple blood, his rags, with Christs royal robes, his copper, with Christs gold, his water with Christs wine, &c. is in the ready way to perish for ever.

Rom. 11. 6 Eph. 2. 5. Rom. 5. 15 16, 18.

On Earth Kings love no Corrivals, power is impatient of participation. Christ will bee *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body; hee will

will bee all in all in the buſineſſe of Juſtification, or hee will bee nothing at all; wee muſt ſay of Chriſt, as it was once ſaid of *Caſar* (*ſocium habet neminem*) hee may have a companion, &c. but hee muſt not have a competitour. 1 Cor. 1. 30 Rom. 5. 19, 20.

Let us ſay of Chriſt, as the Heathen once ſaid of his Petty Gods (*contemno minutulos iſtos Deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) ſo long as hee had his *Jupiter* to friend, hee regarded them not; So, ſo long as wee have our Jeſus to friend, and his Righteouſneſs and Blood to friend, wee ſhould contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Chriſtian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Chriſti*) ſomething of Chriſt in it. Hee that holds not wholly with Chriſt, doth very ſhamefully neglect Chriſt, *Aut totum mecum tene, aut totum omitte*, ſaith *Gregory Nazianzen*. Eph. 3. 9, 10. Pſ. 71 15, 16, 19. compared.

There

There is no other name, no other nature, no other blood, no other merits, no other person to bee justified and saved by, but Jesus Christ; you may run from Creature to Creature, and from Duty to Duty, and from Ordinance to Ordinance; and when you have wearied and tired out your selves in seeking ease and rest, satisfaction and remission, justification and salvation, in one way and another, you will bee forced after all to come to Christ, and to cry out, Ah! none but Christ, none but Christ. Ah! none to Christ, none to Christ, no works to Christs, no duties, no services to Christ, no prayers, no tears to Christ, no righteousnesse, no holinesse to Christ. Well Friends, remember this, that all the tears in the World cannot wipe off (meritoriously) one sin, nor all the Grace and Holinesse that is in Angels and men, buy out the pardon of the least transgression. All remission is only by the

Isa. 55. 2. Rom. 10. 3.

the Blood of Christ.

Sixthly and Lastly; If you would bee good betimes; *Then you must know betimes, that the heart of Jesus Christ is as much set upon Sinners now hee is in Heaven, as ever it was when hee was upon Earth.*

Christ is no lesse loving, lesse mindful, lesse desirous of Sinners eternal welfare now hee is in Heaven (in a far Country) than hee was when hee lived on Earth: witnesse his continuing the Ministery of Reconciliation among poor Sinners in all ages; witnesse the constant treaties, that by his Ambassadours and Spirit hee still hath with poor Sinners, about the things of their peace; the things of eternity; witness his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor Sinners by his Word, Rod, Spirit, to open, to repent, to lay hold on mercy, and to bee at peace with him; witnesse his continual wooing of poor Sinners in the face of all neglects, and put-offs;

2 Cor. 5. 20

Rev. 3. 20.
Isa. 56. 4.
Isa. 27. 5.

Gal. 5. 2, 3
Luke 14.

Prov. 6.9. Mat. 22.4, 23,37. in the face of all delaies and denials; in the face of all harsh entertainment and churlish Answers; in the face of all gain-sayings and carnal reasonings; in the face of all the scorn and contempt that wretched sinners put upon him; and witnesse that plain word, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Heb. 13.8. Christ is the same afore time, in time, and after time, hee is unchangeable in his essence, in his promises, and in his affections. *I am* Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.* Rev. 1.8. 11.ch. 21. 6. c. 22. 13.

The Phrase is taken from the Greek Letters, whereof *Alpha* is the first, and *Omega* is the last; The first and last letter of the Greek Alphabet is a description of mee, saith Christ, who am before all, and after all, who am above all, and in all, who am unchangeable in my self, and in my thoughts and good will to poor sinners; Therefore do not poor souls, entertain any

It was a custome among the *Turks*, to cry out every morning from an high Tower, God alwaies was, and alwaies will bee, and so salute their Mahomet.

any hard thoughts concerning Jesus Christ; as if hee was less mindful, lesse pittiful, and lesse merciful to poor souls now hee is in Heaven, than hee was when his abode was in this world.

And thus I have gone over those six things that you must know concerning Christ betimes, if ever you would bee good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his death-bed, Cardinal *Bembus* citing a text of Scripture to comfort him, hee replied (*Apage has nugas de Christo*) away with these bawbles concerning Christ; but I hope better things of you; and do desire that you will say of all things below this knowledge of Christ (that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jerusalem*, and by the way visiting many brave Cities, with their rare monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments, would often say, I must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*. Ah! so do you Young men

and women, in the midst of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh! wee must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*, this is not that knowledge of Christ that I must have, if ever I am happy here, and blessed hereafter.

4 Duty.

Fourthly and lastly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you must acquaint your selves with those that are good betimes.*

If you would bee gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, then you must begin betimes to be much in with them, who are much in with Christ, who lye near his heart, and know much of his minde: *Hee that walketh with wise men, shall bee wise, but a companion of fools shall bee destroyed*; or as the Hebrew hath it, shall bee broken in peeces, as when an Army is broken and routed by an enemy. (*Holech* from *Halech*) walking with the

Pro. 13. 20. יְרוֹעַ Shall bee broken, or shall bee worse, from רוּעַ to bee naught.

the wise, he shall be wise, for so the Original hath it; it is not talking with the wise, but walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your commending, and praising of the wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your taking a few turns with the wise that will make you wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and constant companions.

'Twas the saying of one, as oft as I have been among wicked men, I return home lesse a man than I was before.

Ah Friends! you should do as *Joseph* in *Ægypt*, of whom the Scripture saith, *Psal.* 105. 22. (according to the Hebrew phrase) that hee tyed the Princes of *Pharoahs* Court about his heart.

If ever you would gain by the Saints, you must binde them upon your souls, you must labour to have very near, close, and intimate communion with them.

The Jews have a Proverb, that

two dry sticks put to a green one will kindle it; The best way to bee in a flame God-ward, Christ-ward, Heaven-ward, and Holiness-ward; is to bee among the dry sticks, the kindle-coals, the Saints: for as live Coals kindle those that are dead; so lively Christians will heat and enliven those that are dead God-wards, Christ-wards, Heaven-wards, and Holiness-wards. As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth the face of man his friend. Pro. 27. 17

Mens Wits, Parts, and Gifts, and industry, commonly grow more strong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference and communion.

And as hee that comes where sweet Spices and Oyntments are stirring, carries away a sweet savour with him: So hee that converseth with those that are good, shall carry away that goodnesse and sweetnesse with him, that shall render him sweet, desirable, and delectable to others.

*Polemon* that *Augustin* speaks of, who was all for Wine and Play, &c. became a brave man when hee came acquainted with the Philosophers School. So many young men, that have been all for Wine and Women, for playing and toying, for vanity and folly, have become brave men, precious men, by the company, counsel, and example of those who were gracious. Doctor *Taylor* the Martyr, rejoyced that ever hee came into Prison, because hee came thither to have acquaintance with that Angel of God, *John Bradford* (as hee calls him) so doubtlesse many young persons there bee that have much cause to rejoyce, and for ever to blesse the Lord, that ever they came acquainted with such and such (who fear the Lord, and who walk in his waies) for the good that they have received by them.

An Ep. 132.

*Algerius* an *Italian* Martyr, said, hee had rather bee in Prison

Moses was of the same minde and metal, Heb. 11, 24 25, 26, 27.

with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Senate-house,

Ah! Young men, young men, you were better bee with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the world, when they are in all their Royalty and Glory; in the Day of Account you will finde that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus*, though in his raggs, than they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in his Purple Robes.

Those that keep ill company, are like those that walk in the Sun, who are tann'd insensibly.

Well, Young men, remember this, cloaths and company do oftentimes tell tales, in a mute, but significant language.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the *Spanish* Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no Companion, than a bad one; The Lord grant that this

this Heathen (and others among them, that were of the same minde with him) may never rise up in judgement against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise may fall.

And thus I have dispatcht those four things that you must bee acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your owne hearts and conditions, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those that fear him) if ever you would be good betimes.

Secondly, *If you would bee good betimes*, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes, *Then you must shun the occasions of sin betimes.* A man will never begin to bee good, till he begin to decline those occasions that have made him bad, 1 *Thes.* 5.22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

Wee must shun (*quicquid fuerit male coloratum*) whatsoever looks but ill-favouredly, as Bernard hath it.

You must shun and bee shye of the very appearance of sin, of the very shewes and shadowes of sin. The word εἶδος, which is ordinarily rendred *Appearance*, signifies kinde

kinde, or sort; and so the meaning of the Apostle seems to be this, *Abstain from all sort, or the whole kinde of evil*; from all, that is truly so, be it never so small.

The least sin is dangerous; *Cæsar* was stab'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice, and Lice.

The least spark may consume the greatest house, the least leak may sink the greatest ship, the least sin is enough to undo thy soul, and therefore shun all the occasions that lead unto it.

Job 31. 1. Gen. 39. 10. Psal. 26. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

*Job* made a Covenant with his eyes; *Joseph* would not bee in the room where his Mistriss was; and *David* (when himself) would not sit with vain persons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, wee cannot bee secure; hee that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from sparkles; hee that is either tender of his credit abroad, or comfort at home, had need shun, and bee shye

shye of the very shew and shadow of sin; hee that would neither wound Conscience nor Credit, God, nor Gospel, had need hate the Garment spotted with the flesh.

Jude 23. The sin and the coat of the sin is to be hated, saith *Ambrose.*

In the Law, God commanded his people, not onely that they should worship no Idol, but that they should demolish all the Monuments of them, and that they should make no Covenant nor affinity with those who worshipped them, and all, least they should be drawn by these occasions to commit Idolatry with them; hee that would not taste of the forbidden fruit, must not so much as gaze on it; and hee that would not bee bit by the Serpent, must not so much as parley with the Serpent.

*Latet anguis in herba.* Snakes are found amongst roses. Numb 6. 3, 4. *Quid est vitare peccata, nisi vitare occasiones peccatorum? Melan,*

It is very observable, That in the Law, the *Nazarite* was not onely commanded to abstain from wine and strong drink, but also hee might not eat Grapes, whether moyst or dry, or any thing that

What is it to avoid sin, but to avoid the occasions of sin?

that is made of the Vine-Tree; from the Kernels, even to the Husk; but why not these small things, in which there could bee no danger of Drunkennesse? surely, lest by the contentment of these, hee might bee drawn to desire the Wine, and so bee brought on to sin, to break his Vow (and so make work for Hell, or for the Physician of souls.) God hereby forbidding the most remote occasions, shews how wary and exactly careful men should bee, to shun, and avoyd all occasions, provocations, and appearances of evil, and indeed, wee had need to keep off from slippery places, who can hardly stand fast on dry ground; hee that ventures upon the occasion of sin, and then prayes, *Lord, lead mee not into temptation*, is like him that thrusts his finger into the fire, and then prayes that it may not bee burnt; or like him that is resolved to quench the fire with oyle, which in-

instead of quenching it, is as fuel to feed it, and encrease it. It was a notable saying of one, (*Majus est miraculum inter vehementes occasiones non cadere, quam mortuos suscitare*) It is a greater miracle not to fall, being among strong occasions, than it is to raise up the dead; hee that would not bee defiled, must not touch Pitch; hee that would not bee burnt, must not carry fire in his bosome; hee that would not eat the Meat, must not meddle with the Broth; hee that would not fall in the pit, must not dance upon the brink; hee that would not feel the blow, must keep off from the Train; *keep thee farre from a false matter*, *Exod.* 23. 7. Hee that will not flye from the occasions and allurements of sin (though they may seem never so pleasant to the eye, or sweet to the taste) shall finde them in the end to bee more sharp than Vinegar, more bitter than Worm-wood, more

*Bernard* in Cant. Serm. 65.

Pro. 6. 27, 28, 29. *Non diu tutus est, periculo proximus. Cyp.* He is not long safe, that is near to danger.

more deadly than poyson.

There is a great truth in that saying of the Son of *Syrach*, *Hee that loveth danger, shall perish therein; hee that will not decline danger, shall not bee able to decline destruction.* Eccl. 3 26. 27.

*Socrates* speaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the lustrating water fell upon them, detesting (saith the Historian) the Garment spotted by the flesh! and will you, O young men! play and toy with the occasions of sin? the Lord forbid.

There are Stories of several Heathens, that have shunned and avoyded the occasions of sin, and will you dare to venture upon the occasions of sin?

*Alexander* would not see the woman after whom hee might have lusted.

*Scipio Africanus* warring in *Spaine*, took New *Carthage* by storm, at which time a beautiful and noble Virgin fled to him for

for succour to preserve her chastity, hee being but four and twenty years old: (and so in the heat of youth) hearing of it, would not suffer her to come into his sight, for fear of temptation; but caused her to bee restored in safety to her Father. *Aurel. victor.*

*Livia* counselled her Husband *Augustus*, not onely not to doe wrong, but not to seem to do so, &c. *Dio. in vita.*

*Cæsar* would not search *Pompeys* Cabinet, lest hee should finde new matters of revenge.

*Plato* mounted upon his Horse, and judging himself a little moved with pride, did presently light from his Horse, lest hee should bee overtaken with loftinesse in rideing.

*Theseus* is said to cut off his Golden locks, lest his enemies should take advantage by taking hold of them.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathens thus shun and flye from the occasions of sin

sin, and will not you? will not you, who sit under the Sun-shine of the Gospel? these will in the great day of account bee sad and sore witnesses against those that dally and play with the occasions of sin.

To prevent Carnal carefulnesse, Christ sends his Disciples to school, to the irrational Creatures, *Mat.* 6. 26–32. And to prevent your closing with the occasions of sin, let mee send you to school to the like Creatures, that you may learn by them to shun and avoid the occasions of sin.

The *Sepie*, a certain kinde of Fish, perceiving themselves in danger of taking, by an instinct which they have, they do darken the water; and so many times escape the Net which is laid for them.

Geese (they say) when they flye over *Taurus*, they keep stones in their mouthes, lest by gagling, they should discover themselves to the Eagles, which are amongst the Mountains waiting for them

them; now if all these considerations put together, will not work you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying,

*Hee that will no evil do,*
*Must do nothing belongs thereto.*

The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the Passeover bee done, lest they should bee tempted to eat of it. Exod. 12. 19.

## 3 Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes.*

If you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes, then you must study Gods Omni-presence betimes. *Doth not hee see my wayes, and count all my steps, for his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and hee seeth all his goings? There is no darkenesse, nor shadow of death, where the* Psal. 139. 2—14. Job 31. 4. ch. 34. 21, 22, &c.

*workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*

*Non se putent adulteri noctis tenebris, vel parietum obtegi.* Beda.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young strumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanness, only with this Argument, that God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument *Salomon* labours to take off his Young man from carnal and sinful courses; *And why wilt thou my son bee ravish'd with a strange Woman, and embrace the bosome of a stranger? for the wayes of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and hee pondereth all his goings.* Thou mayest deceive all the world, like that counterfeit *Alexander* in *Josephus* his Story, but *Augustus* will not bee deceived, hee hath quicker and sharper eyes.

Pro. 5. 20, 21.

*Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli astant. &c.* Take heed what thou doest, God beholds thee, Angels observe thee.

Ah! Young men, young men, you may deceive this man, and that, and as easily deceive your selves, but you cannot deceive him, who is (πανόφθαλμος, *totus oculus*)

*oculus*) all-eye. As the eyes of a well-drawn Picture are fastened upon thee, which way soever thou turnest, so are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one who being tempted to Adultery, said, they could not bee private enough, and being carried from room to room, answered, wee are not yet private enough, God is here.

Ah Friends! his eyes which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, compasseth thy words, thy wayes, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The *Egyptian* Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a Scepter, shewing that he sees and rules all things. Jer. 13. 27. ch. 29. 23.

Ah Friends! All thoughts, Words, Hopes, and Hearts, are naked, opened, dissected, and quartered before that God with whom you have to do. God is very curious and exact in marking and observing what is done by men, that he may render to every man according to his works. Heb. 4. 13. *Tetracheliſmena.*

Aug. de Civ Dei l. 6, c. 10.

St. *Augustin* speaks of an old *Comedian*, when having no other spectatours, went usually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods.

Ah! Young men and Women, the eye of God should bee more to you, than all the world besides; O that the Scripture might bee written with the Pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. *Hear yee not mee* (saith the Lord) *and will yee not tremble at my presence?* Jer. 5. 21, 22.

There is a great truth in that saying of his (*Magna nobis ex hac indita est probitatis necessitas, quia omnia axie oculos judicis facimus cuncta cernentis*) A great necessity of goodnesse is from hence put into us, because wee do all things before the eyes of a Judge, that sees all things. Boetius de consol. l. 5.

## 4 Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must hearken to the voyce of Conscience betimes.* 2 Tim. 1. 3

A

A man will never begin to bee good, till hee begins to hearken to what Conſcience ſpeaks: So long as man turns a deaf ear to Conſcience, hee is a ſafe Priſoner to Satan, and a ſure enemy to good.

Pſal 58.4. Joh.3.20, 21.

Ah! how good might many have been, had they but begun betimes to hearken to Conſcience?

Ah! Young men, do not dally with Conſcience, do not play, do not trifle with Conſcience, doe not ſtop your ears againſt Conſcience; hee that will not in his Youth give Conſcience audience, ſhall at laſt bee forced to hear ſuch Lectures from Conſcience, as ſhall make his life a very Hell. A ſleepy Conſcience, is like a ſleepy Lion, when hee awakes, hee roars and tears, ſo will Conſcience, *Mark* 9. 22. Conſcience is (*mille teſtes*) a thouſand witneſſes for or againſt a man; hee that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conſcience, ſhall at laſt

Such ſhall finde Conſcience to be *Judex, index, vindex.*

finde his Conscience like *Prometheus's vulture*, that lies ever a gnawing. *Judas* found it so, and *Spira* found it so, and *Blaer* a great Counsellor of *Scotland*, found it so.

*Jo. Wolf. lect. mem. To. 2. ad an. 1547.*

I have read of one *John Hofmeister*, that fell sick in his Inne, as hee was travelling towards *Ausspurge* in *Germany*, and grew to that horrour of Conscience, that they were fain to binde him in his bed with chains, where hee cried out, that hee was for ever cast off by God, and that the Promises that were set before him would do him no good, and all because hee had wounded his Conscience, and turned a deaf ear to Conscience.

Well Young men, if you will not betimes hearken to Conscience, you shall at last hear Conscience saying to you, as the probationer Disciple said to Christ, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; so saith Conscience, Sinner, I have called up-

Mat. 8. 19.

upon thee many a thousand times, and told thee, that I must by commission, bee thy best friend, or thy worst enemy; but thou wouldest not hear; and therefore now I will follow thee, whither ever thou goest; fast, and I will follow thee, and fill thee with horrours and terrours; feast, and I will follow thee, and shew thee such a Hand-writing upon the wall, as shall cause thy countenance to change, thy thoughts to bee troubled, the joynts of thy loyns to bee loosed, and thy knees dashed one against another; stay at home, and I will follow thee, from bed to board; go abroad, and I will follow thee into all places and companies, and thou shalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that thou hast so often and so long neglected my calls; and disobeyed my voyce, and walkt contrary to me; now thou shalt finde a truth in that saying of *Luther* (*una guttula malæ conscientiæ totum mare*, &c.) one drop of an evil Conscience

Dan. 5. 5, 6 *Tolle conscientiam, tolle omnia* Take away conscience, and take away all, said the Heathen.

swallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well young men, There is a day a comming, wherein a good Conscience will bee better than a good Purse, for then the Judge will not bee put off with a suit of complements, or fair words, nor drawn aside with hope of reward; and therefore as you would bee able to hold up your heads in that day, make conscience of hearkening to the voyce of Conscience in this your day.

## 5 Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you must know betimes, wherein true happinesse lies.*

For a man will never begin to be good, till hee begins to understand wherein his happiness consists.

*Quot homines, tot sententiæ,* so many men, so many minds.

The Philosophers speaking of happiness, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intending something, and yet resolving nothing. Therefore the

the man in *Plutarch*, hearing them wrangle about mans (*ſummum bonum*) chiefeſt good, one placing it in this, and another in that; hee went to the Market, and bought up all that was good, hoping among all, hee ſhould not miſs of it, but hee did; many look for happineſs in ſin, others look for it in the Creatures, but they muſt all ſay, it is not in us (*Nil dat quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not; if the Conduit Pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no money, he can give no money; if the Creatures have no happineſſe, they can give no happineſs; Now this jewel, this pearl, happineſs, is not to bee found in the breaſt, in the boſome of Creatures; in a word, becauſe I muſt haſten to a cloſe, mans happineſs lies,

Iſa. 56.12. Job 28.14.

First, In his communion with God, as experience and Scripture demonſtrates. Happy is that people, that is in ſuch a caſe (but give mee that word again) yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is the

Pſ. 144 15

Lord.

Lord. A man whose soul is in communion with God, shall finde more pleasure in a desert, in a dungeon, in a den, yea, in death, than in the Palace of a Prince, than in all worldly delights and contents, &c.

Secondly, In pardon of sin, *Blessed is hee whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* It is not, blessed is the honourable man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the rich man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the learned man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the politick man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the Victorious man, but, blessed is the pardoned man; Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sins, saith *Luther*.

Psa. 32. 1, 2

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when wee shall bee here no more. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see*

*see God.* Now they see him but darkly, but in Heaven they shall see him face to face, they shall know as they are known; but of these things I have spoken largely elsewhere; and therefore shall satisfie my self with these hints. Mat. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 13. 12.

### 6 Direction.

Lastly, *If you would bee good betimes, then you must break your covenant with sin betimes.*

You must fall out with your lusts betimes; you must arm and fence your selves against sin betimes; a man never begins to fall in with Christ, till he begins to fall out with his sins; till sin and the soul be two, Christ and the soul cannot be one: *Now to work your hearts to this, you should always look upon sin under these Notions.* Isa. 28. 15. 18.

### 1 Notion.

First, *If you would have the league dissolved betwixt sin and your souls betimes, then look upon sin under the notion of an enemy betimes.*

Dearly

1 Pet. 2. 11 Sins, especially against knowledge (are *peccata vulnerantia & devastantia*) wounding and wasting.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. As the Viper is killed by the young ones in her belly; so are poor Sinners, betrayed and killed by their own lusts, that are nourished in their bosomes.

*Pittacus*, a Philosopher, challenging *Phlyon* the *Athenian* Captaine (in theirs Wars against them) to single Combate, carryed a Net privily, and so caught him, and overcame him; So doth sin with poor sinners, the dangerous, pernicious, malignant nature of sin: You may see in the story of the *Italian*, who first made his Enemy deny God; and then stabbed him to the heart, and so at once murthered both body and soul. Sin betrayes us into the hand of the Devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampson* into the hands of the *Philistims*.

Sugered poysons go down pleasantly; Oh! but when they are down,

down, they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-strings asunder, it is so with sin; Ah! poor souls, have not you often found it so?

When *Phocas* the Murtherer, thought to secure himself by building high walls, hee heard a voyce from Heaven, telling him, that though hee built his Bulwarks never so high, yet the sin within would soon undermine all.

St. *Ambrose* reports of one *Theotimus*, that having a Disease upon his body, the Physician told him, that except hee did abstain from intemperance, Drunkenness, and uncleanness, hee would lose his Eyes; his heart was so desperately set upon his sins, that hee cryes out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewel sweet light.

Ah! how did his lusts war both against body and soul?

The Old man is like a Treacherous Friend, and a friendly Traytour; though it bee a harder thing

thing to fight with a mans lusts, than it is to fight with the Crosse, yet you must fight or dye, if you are not the death of your sins, they will prove the death of your souls.

As one of the Dukes of *Venice* died fighting against the Nauratines, with his weapons in his hand.

The Oracle told the *Cyrrheans*, (*noctesq; diesq; belligerandum*) they could not bee happy, unlesse they waged Warre night and day; no more can wee, except wee live and dye fighting against our lusts.

Ah! Young men, Can you look upon sin under the Notion of an enemy, and not breake with it, and not arme against it?

Well, remember this, the pleasure and sweetnesse that follows victory over sin, is a thousand times beyond that seeming sweetnesse that is in sin; and as victory over sin is the sweetest victory, so it is the greatest victory; there is no conquest to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions. *Hee that is slow to anger, is better*

than

*than the mighty, and hee that ruleth his Spirit, than hee that taketh a City.*

It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery lusts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperour was upon his dying bed, among all his Victories onely one comforted him, and that was victory over his worst enemy, *viz.* his own naughty heart.

Rom. 7. 22 23. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6. Gal. 5. 17.

Ah! Young men, young men, your worst enemies are within you, and all their plots, designs, and assaults are upon your souls, your most noble part; they know if that fort-Royal bee won, all is their own, and you are undone, and shall bee their slaves for ever; and therefore it stands you upon, to arm your selves against these inbred enemies; and if you ingage Christ in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and when

when you shall lye upon your dying beds, you will then finde that there is no comfort to that, which ariseth from the conquests of your own hearts, your own lusts.

2 Notion.

Secondly, *If you would break covenant with sin, if you would arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then look upon sin as the souls bonds.*

2 Pet. 3. 6. Gal. 3. 10. Joh. 8. 34.

For as bonds tye things together, so doth sin tye the sinner, and the curse together, it bindes the sinner and wrath together, it links the sinner and Hell together. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitternesse; and in the bond of iniquity; iniquity is a chain, a bond, now bonds and chains gall the body; and so doth sin the soul; and as poor Captives are held fast in their Chains, so are sinners in their sins, they cannot redeem themselves by price, nor by power.

2 Tim. 2. ult.

Ah! Young men, young men, no

no bondage to soul-bondage, no slavery to soul-slavery; the *Israelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Christians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baser and ignoble part of man, but yours is soul-bondage, soul-slavery, which is the saddest and greatest of all.

S. *Austin* saith of *Rome*, that shee was the great Mistress of the world, and the great drudge of sin.

Ah Friends! You should never look upon your sinnes, but you should look upon them as your bonds, yea, as the worst bonds that ever were; all other Chains are golden Chains, Chains of Pearl, compared to those Chains of Iron and Brass; those chains of lusts, with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus look upon his chains, his sins, and not loathe them, and not labour for freedome from them? *Justinius* the Emperours Motto was (*Libertas res inestimabilis*) liberty is unvaluable; if Civil liberty bee, surely Spiritual liberty is much more; if you ask souls that were once in a state of bondage, but

are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

*Chrysost. Hom. 19. in prior. Epist. ad Corinth.*

It was a good observation of St. *Chrysostome*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistress was the servant, when she was at the beck of her own lusts, when she tempted, and he refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation, are the greatest free-men, others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedome, *Tit.* 3.3.

3 Notion.

Jude 23. *Arpazontes* signifies a violent snatching, as the tender hearted Mother to save the life of her childe, puls it hastily, & with violence out of the fire.

Thirdly, *If you would break leagne with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look alwaies upon sin under the notion of fire.*

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire. Oh! snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a childe, a friend, out of the fire; or as the Angel snatch'd *Lot* out of *Sodom*, hastily, and with a holy violence: natural Fire may burn the house, the goods,

goods, the treasure, the servant, the childe, the wife, the body, but this Fire burns the soul, it destroyes and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand Worlds; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench the fire which burns his Neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the Fire that burns their Neighbours souls: this is, and this shall be for a lamentation.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand upon burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh! how unable shall I bee to endure the pains of Hell? and this restrained him from evil; but what is the fire of Hell to the fire of sin? now to provoke you to look upon Sin under the notion of Fire, consider with mee the sundry resemblances between materal and immaterial fire, between corporal common Fire, and between

Dr. *Denisons* threefold resolution, part. 2 sect. 2.

this ſpiritual fire, Sin. As,

Firſt, Fire is terrible and dreadful; A Ship on fire, an Houſe on fire, Oh how dreadful is it? ſo ſin ſet home upon the Conſcience, is exceeding terrible and dreadful. *Mine iniquity* (ſo the Hebrew) *is greater than I can bear*; ſin or iniquity is often put for the puniſhment of ſin, by a Metonimy of the efficient for the effect; for Sin is the natural parent of puniſhment, *Mine iniquity*, ſaith *Cain*, *is ſo great, and lies ſo heavy, ſo terrible and dreadful upon my Conſcience, that it cannot bee forgiven*; and thus by his diffidence hee ſtabs two at once; the Mercy of God, and his own ſoul. So *Judas*, *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, and he went and hanged himſelf.*

Gen. 4. 13. *Mentiris Cain*, thou lyeſt *Cain*, ſaith one on the Text. Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5.

As there is no fighting with a mighty Fire, ſo there is no bearing up, when God ſets home ſin upon the Conſcience; a man will then chuſe ſtrangling, or hanging rather than living under ſuch wounds and laſhes of Conſcience.

Hiſto-

Hiſtories abound with inſtances of this nature; but I muſt haſten to a cloſe.

Secondly, Fire is moſt dangerous and pernicious when it breaks forth of the Chimney, or of the Houſe, ſo it is with ſin. Sin is bad in the eye, worſe in the tongue, worſer in the heart, but worſt of all in the life. Fire when out of its proper place, may do much hurt in the houſe, but when it flames abroad, then it doth moſt miſchief to others. 2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Sin in the heart may undoe a man, but Sin in the life may undo others, as well as a mans ſelf. Set a guard upon thy Eye, a greater upon thy Heart, but the greateſt of all upon thy Life. Job 31. 1. Pro. 4. 23. Eph. 5. 15.

*Salvian* relates how the Heathen did reproach ſome Chriſtians, who by their lewd Lives, made the Goſpel of Chriſt to bee a reproach, where (ſaid they) is that good Law which they doe beleeve? where are thoſe rules *Salvianus de G. D. l. 4*

of Godlinesse which they do learn, they read the Holy Gospel, and yet are unclean; they hear the Apostles Writings and yet are drunk; they follow Christ, and yet disobey Christ; they profess a holy Law and yet do lead impure Lives.

But the Lives of other Christians have been so holy, that the very Heathens observing them, have said, surely this is a good God, whose servants are so good.

It is brave, when the Life of a Christian is a Commentary upon Christs life.

*Augustin.* One speaking of the Scripture, saith, (*Verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to be lived, and practised, not read only.

*Plutarch.* A Heathen adviseth us to demean our selves so circumspectly, as if our enemies did alwaies behold us.

*Epictetus.* And said another, for shame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of Stoicks. Sirs, Live as Christians, or lay down the name of Christians.

Third-

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber clay to become ſtiff and ſtrong for the Potters uſe. So ſin hardens, it hardens the heart againſt the commands of God, the calls of Chriſt, and the wreſtlings of the ſpirit. Jer. 5.3. ch. 19 ult. Iſa. 9 13.

As you ſee in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and moſt that are under the ſound of the Goſpel.

Ah! how many hath this fire (Sin) hardened in theſe dayes, by working them to ſlight ſoul-ſoftening means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening thoughts of God, and to fall in with ſoul-hardening company, and ſoul-hardening principles, and ſoul-hardening examples, or hardened and unſenſible Sinners? one long ſince thus complained, that they did (*patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quam ſuam*) more calmly paſs by the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe which are done unto themſelves; This age is full of ſuch hardened unſenſible ſouls. Jer. 2.25. ch. 18.12.

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active element, so is Sin.

Gen. 22. Psa. 51. Job 3. Mat. 26. Rom. 1. 15 &c.

Ah! how lively and active was this fire in *Abraham*, *David*, *Job*, St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and other Saints? though Christ by his Death hath given it its mortal wound, yet it lives, and is, and will bee active in the deareſt Saints. Though Sin and Grace were not born together, neither ſhall they dye together; yet while beleevers live in this World, they muſt live together. There is a Hiſtory that ſpeaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a ſtone-wall, and all means was uſed to kill it, they cut off the branches, and it grew again, they cut down the body, and it grew again, they cut it up by the root, and ſtill it lived, and grew until they pulled down the ſtone-wall; till Death ſhall pull down our ſtone-walls, Sin will live, this fire will burn.

*Iſodore* the Monk, was very much out, who vaunted that he had felt in himſelf no motion to ſin forty years together.

Wee may ſay of Sin: as ſome ſay of Cats, that they have many lives; kill them and they will live

live again, kill them again, and they will live again; ſo kill Sin once, and it will live again, kill it again, and it will live again, &c. Sin oftentimes is like that Monſter *Hydra*, cut off one head, and many will riſe up in its room.

Fifthly, Fire is of a penetrating nature, it pierceth and windeth it ſelf into every corner and chink, and ſo doth Sin winde it ſelf into our thoughts, words, and works, it will winde it ſelf into our underſtandings, to darken them; and into our judgements, to pervert them; and into our wills, to poyſon them, and into our affections, to diſorder them; and into our conſciences, to corrupt them; and into our carriages, to debaſe them. Sin will winde it ſelf into every duty, and every mercy, it will winde it ſelf into every one of our enjoyments and concernments.

Iſa. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 7. 13 17.

Sin is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil. (*Quodcunque in peccato, peccatum eſt*) whatſoever is in ſin, is ſin.

*Hannibal* having overcome the *Romans*, put on their armour on

on his Souldiers; and so by that policy, they being taken for *Romans*, won a City, but what are *Hannibals* wiles, to Sins wiles, or Satans wiles? if you have a minde to bee acquainted with their wiles, look over my Treatise, called, *Precious remedies against Satans Devices.*

Psal.21.9. Sixthly and lastly, Fire is a devouring, a consuming element, it turns all fuel into ashes; It is a Wolf that eats up all: So Sin is a fire that devours and consumes all, it turned *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* into ashes, it hath destroyed the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, and *Grecian* Kingdomes, and will at last destroy the *Roman* Kingdome also; this Woolf ate up *Sampsons* strength, *Absoloms* beauty, *Achitophels* policy, and *Herods* glory, &c. It hath drowned one World already, and will at last burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happinesse, the joyes, the comforts, the souls that this fire (Sin) hath con

2 Pet.2.5, 6.
Prov.6.32
Eccle.9.18
Pro.13.13
ch.20.29.
ch.11.3.
ch.15.25.
ch.21.7.

consumed and destroyed! &c.

*Peter Camois* a Bishop of *Berry* in *France*, in his draught of Eternity, *Numb.* 7. 5. tells us, that some devout personages caused those words of the Prophet *Isaiah* (to bee written in Letters of Gold upon their Chimney-peeces) *Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14

Ah! young men, young men, I desire that you may alwayes look upon sin under the Notion of fire, yea, as such fire as layes the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when other things will not.

I have read of a grave and chaste Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lewd Ruffian, after some discourse, shee called for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but one hour, hee answered, it is an

an unkinde requeſt, to whom ſhe replied, that ſeeing hee would not do ſo much as to put one finger upon the coals for one hour, ſhee could not yeeld to do that, for which ſhe ſhould bee tormented, both body and ſoul in Hell fire for ever. The Application is eaſie, &c.

## 4 Notion.

Fourthly, *If you would break with ſin betimes, if you would arm againſt ſin in the ſpring and morning of your dayes, then you ſhould look upon ſin under the notion of a Theef.*

And indeed ſin is the greateſt Theef, the greateſt Robber in the world; it robbed the Angels of all their glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradiſe and felicity, and it hath robbed all the ſons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the leaſt of which was more worth than Heaven and Earth.

2 Pet. 2. 4. Gen. 3.

1 It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly engraven

graven upon them, had *Adam* ſtood, &c.

2 It hath robbed them of their Son-ſhip, and of Sons have made them ſlaves.

3 It hath robbed them of their friendſhip, and made them enemies.

4 It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowſhip with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them ſtrangers and Aliens.

5 It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miſerable. It hath robbed many a Nation of the Goſpel, and many a Pariſh of many a happy guide, and many a Chriſtian of the favour of God, the joyes of the Spirit, and the Peace of Conſcience.

Oh! the health, the wealth, the honour, the friends, the relations that ſinne hath robbed thouſands of.

Nay, It hath robbed many of their gifts, their arts, their parts, their memory, their judgement; yea,

Well did one of the Fathers call Pride and Vainglory, the ſweet ſpoiler of ſpiritual excellencies, and a pleaſant Theef.

yea, their very reason, as you may see in *Pharoah*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzer*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and those *Babylonish* Princes that accused *Daniel*.

And so in *Menippus* of *Phenicia*, who having lost his goods, strangled himself. And so *Dinarcus Phidon*, at a certain losse, cut his own throat to save the charge of a Cord. And so *Augustus Cæsar* (in whose time Christ was born) was so troubled and astonished at the relation of an overthrow from *Varus*, that for certain months together, hee let the hair of his Head and Beard grow still, and wore it long, yea, and other whiles would run his head against the doors, crying out, *Quintilius Varus*, deliver up my Legions again; by all which it is most apparent, that sin is the greatest theef in all the world.

*Suetonius.*

Oh! Then who would not break League and Covenant with it, and be still in pressing of God to do Justice upon it? &c.

5 No-

5 Notion.

Fifthly, *If you would break with sin, and arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then you must look upon sin under the notion of a burden betimes.* Nah. 1. 1. Hab. 1. 1. Mal. 1. 1.

And indeed, Sin of all burdens is the heaviest burden in all the World. *Innumerable evils have compassed mee about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon mee, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth mee.* Psal. 40. 12. And again, *Mine iniqueties are gone over my head* (saith the same person) *as an heavy burden*, Psal. 38. 4. they are too heavy for mee to bear. Sin is a weight that easily besets poor souls, it is a burden that so troubles them, and puzzles them, that so curbs them, and girds them, that so presses, and oppresses them, as that it wrings many bitter tears from their eyes, and many sad and grievous sighs and groans from their hearts. Heb. 12. 1. Rom. 7. 13. *ult.*

Again, As Sin is a burden to Chri-

Christians; so it is a burden to Heaven, it made Heaven weary

Jude 6. to bear the Angels that fell; no sooner had they sinned, but Heaven groans to bee eased of them; and it never left groaning till Justice had turned them a groaning to Hell.

Again, As Sin is a burden to Heaven, so it is a burden to the Earth, witnesse her swallowing

Numb. 16. 26. 35. up *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Wives, Children, Goods, Servants, &c. Ah Sinners! your sins makes the very earth to groan; they make the Earth weary of bearing you. Oh! how doth the earth groan and long to swallow up those earthly wretches, whose hopes, whose hearts, are buried in the earth, these shall have little of Heaven, but enough of Earth when they come to dye.

*Cornelius a Lapide*, tells a story, that hee heard of a famous Preacher, who shewing the bon-

Rom. 8. 19 20, 21, 22, 23. dage of the Creature, brings in the Crea-

Creatures complaining thus, Oh! that wee could serve such as are godly! Oh! that our substance and our flesh might bee incorporated into godly people, that so wee might rise into glory with them; Oh! that our flesh might not bee incorporated into the flesh of Sinners, for if it bee, wee shall go to Hell, and would any Creatures go to Hell? Oh! we are weary of bearing sinners, wee are weary of serving of sinners; thus the Creatures groan, thus the Creatures complain, the Sinners sins forcing them to it, &c.

Again, Sin is a burden to God, *Behold, I am pressed under you, as a Cart is pressed that is full of sheaves*, by this plain pithy country comparison, God shewes how sadly hee is pressed and oppressed, how sorely hee is wearied and tired with those peoples sins. Divine Patience is even worn out; Justice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God seems to Amo. 2. 13

groan under the pressure of their sins, as a Cart seems to do under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thou hast made mee to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied mee with thine iniquities.* Isa.43.24. I am as weary of your sins, as a Travelling Woman is weary of her pains, saith God. Sin was such a burden to God, that hee sweeps it off with a sweeping flood, *Gen.* 7. &c.

Again, Sin is a burden to Christ, it made him sweat, as never man sweat; It made him sweat great drops of clotted or congealed bloud; Sin put Christs whole body into a bloody sweat, it made him groan pittiously, when hee bare our sins in his body on the Tree. Sin made his soul heavy even to the death, and had hee not been one that was mighty, yea, that was Almighty, hee had fainted and failed under his burden. And thus you see what a burden sinne is to man, to the Creatures, to Heaven, to Earth, to God, to Christ; and therefore as

Luke 22. 44. A strange watering of a Garden. *Bern.* 1 Pet. 2. 24

Isa. 9, 6.

as you would break with sin betimes, look alwaies upon it as a burden, yea, as the greatest and heaviest burden in all the world, &c.

6 Notion.

Sixthly and lastly, *If you would break Covenant with sin, and arm, and fence your selves against it betimes, then you must look upon it betimes under the notion of a Tyrant.* Tit. 3. 3.

And indeed, sin is the worst and greatest Tyrant in the world. Other Tyrants can but tyrannize over our bodies, but Sin is a Tyrant that tyrannizes over both body and soul, as you may see in the sixth and seventh of the *Romans*; sin is a Tyrant that hath a kinde of jurisdiction in most mens hearts, it sets up the Law of Pride, the Law of passion, the Law of Oppression, the Law of Formality, the Law of Hypocrisie, the Law of Carnality, the Law of Self-love,

the Law of Carnal Reason, the Law of Unbeleef, and strictly commands subjection to them, and proclaims fire and sword to all that stand out; this Saints and Sinners, good men and bad, do sufficiently experience.

*Thales*, one of the seven Sages, used to say, that few Tyrants lived to be old, but it is far otherwise with this Tyrant Sin,

Sin is a Tyrant of many thousand years standing, and though it hath had many a wound, and many a foil, and received much opposition, yet still it plaies the Tyrant all the World over. Oh! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ake, the souls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Pro. 4. 16.

*Pharaohs* Tyranny was nothing to Sins Tyranny, this Tyrant will not so much as suffer his slaves to sleep, They sleep not, except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unlesse they cause some to fall. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

Isa 57. 20, 21.

Other Tyrants have been brought

brought down, and brought under by a Humane power, but this cannot, but by a Divine, the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this World, but it is only the power of Christ, that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. therefore engage Christ in the conflict, draw him into the battel, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

*Vitellius*, who had been Emperour of all the World, yet was driven thorow the streets of *Rome* stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, &c.

*Adronicus* the Emperour, for his cruelty towards his people, was by them at last shamefully deposed, and after many contumelies, hanged up by his heels.

*Ptolomy* was put on a Cross. *Bajacet* in an Iron Cage. *Phocas* broken on the wheel. *Lycaon* cast to the Doggs (as well as *Jezabel.*) *Attalus* thrust into a Forge. King *Gath* into a Beer-barrel, &c. But none

of these that have tamed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts, that have been in their own bosomes; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants, who notwithstanding have died for ever by the hand of a Tyrant within &c.

## CHAP. VIII.

AND thus much for the Directions that Young men must follow, if they would bee good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their dayes. I shall now give some briet answers to the Young mans Objections, and the Old mans Scruples, and so close up this discourse.

### Object. 1.

*But some Young men may object and say, You would have us to bee good betimes,*

*times, and to seek and serve the Lord in the Prime-rose of our dayes. But it may bee time enough hereafter to follow this Counsel; wee are young, and it may bee time enough for us to minde these things hereafter, when wee have satisfied the flesh so and so, or when we have got enough of the World, and laid up something that will stand us in stead, and that may oyle our joynts when wee are old.* Now

To this Objection I answer,

First, That it is the greatest folly and madnesse in the World to put off God, and the great things of eternity, with may-bees; what Tradesman, what Merchant, what Mariner, so mad, so fooliſh, so blockiſh, as to put off a present season, a present opportunity of profit and advantage, upon the account of a may-bee? It may bee I may have as good a season, it may bee I shall have as golden an opportunity to get, and to inrich my self as this is; and therefore farewell to this. No men that are in their right mindes will

argue thus; and why then should you, especially in the things that are of an everlasting concernment to you.

I have read of one *Monarcho*, a frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his Vassals, and as frantick are they, who wilfully neglect present seasons of grace, upon the account of a future may-bee, &c.

Secondly, I answer, it may bee if thou neglectest this present season and opportunity of grace, thou mayest never have another, it may bee mercy may never knock more, if thou dost not now open; it may be Christ shall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou dost not close with him, and accept of him; it may bee the Spirit will never strive more with thee, if now thou dost resist him, and withstand him; it may bee a pardon shall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it; it may bee the Gospel shall never sound more in thy ears, if now

Young men, if you will but go into burial places, you shall finde graves exactly of your length.

now thou wilt not hear it, now set one may-bee against another may-bee, set Gods may-bee against thine own may-bee; but,

Thirdly, Doubtlesse there are many thousand thousands now in Hell, who have pleased themselves, and put off God, and the seasons of grace, with a may-bee, hereafter may bee time enough, It may bee when I have gratified such a Lust, and when I have treasured so much of the World, I will return, and seek, and serve the Lord, but before ever this season or opportunity came, Justice hath cut the threed of their Lives, and they are now miserable for ever; and now they are still a cursing themselves, because they have slipt their golden opportunities upon the account of a may-bee, &c. But,

It was an unspeakable vexation to King *Lysimachus* that his staying to drink one draught of water, lost him his Kingdome.

Fourthly and lastly, This putting off of God, and the present seasons of Grace with a may-bee, is very provoking to God, as you may see, if you will but read, from

from the twentieth verse to the three and thirty of the first of *Proverbs*. Nothing stirs and provokes a Master more, than his servants putting off his service or his commands with a may-bee; it may be I will, it may bee I may do this and that; nothing puts a Master sooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may see by comparing *Psa.* 95. *vers.* 6. to the end, with that third of the *Hebrews*, and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. read the words, and tremble at the thought of a may-bee, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the seasons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hand one for another, and then made it an excuse, a put off, they were lame, and so could not serve in the Gallies of *Francis* the first, King of *France*, but this practice of theirs did so insense and provoke the King, that he sent them both to the Gallows.

I suppose the Reader is not so young, but knows how to apply it.

Object. 2.

*If I should begin to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and morning of my dayes, I should lose my friends, I should lose their favour, for they are carnal and worldly, and had rather I should seek after gold, than God, the Creature, than Christ, Earth, than Heaven, &c.*

Now to this I answer, Surely you are out; for,

First, This is the High-way, the readiest way to gain the best, the surest, and the soundest Friends: *When a Mans wayes please the Lord, hee maketh even his enemies to bee at peace with him.* When a man falls in with God, God will work the creatures to fall in with him: *Joseph* found it so, and *Jacob* found it so, and *Job* found it so, the three Children found it so, and *Daniel* found it

Prov. 16. 7 Job 5. 23. — 28.

it so, as you all know that have but read the Scripture. And many in this age (as bad as it is) have found, that the best way to make friends, is first, to make God our friend. Ah! Young men, young men, you shall not lose your friends (by seeking and serving of the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worst for the best; hee that gives up himself betimes to the Lord, shall have God for his friend, and Christ for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Christ will bee to such,

First, *An omnipotent friend.*
Secondly, *An omniscient friend.*
Thirdly, *An omni-present friend.*
Fourthly, *An indeficient friend.*
Fifthly, *An independent friend.*
Sixthly, *An immutable friend.*
Seventhly, *A watchful friend.*
Eighthly, A *loving friend.*
Ninthly, A *faithful friend.*
Tenthly, A *compassionate friend.*
Eleventhly, A *close friend.*

Luke 15.7. 10. Isa. 6.7, 8, 9. Heb. 4. 13. Isa. 59. 16, 17. ch. 44. 24. Mal 3.6. Psal. 121. 4, 5.

There

*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a Brother*, Pro. 18. 24. such a friend is Christ, and such a friend is as ones own soul, a rare happiness, hardly to bee match'd. 1 Joh. 4. 16 Tit. 1. 2. Isa. 63. 9.

Twelfthly, *An universal friend*, a friend in all cases, and a friend in all places. Christ is so a friend to every one of his, as if hee were a friend to none besides: Hence it is that they say, not only our Lord, our God, but my Lord, and my God. Christ is such an universal friend, as that he supplies the place, and acts the part of every friend. Luke 1. 43 Joh. 20. 28 Phil. 4. 19.

Thirteenthly, *Hee is our first friend*, Psa. 90. 1. before wee had a friend in all the world, he was our friend, *Prov.* 8. 21. Joh. 13. 1.

Lastly, *Hee is a constant friend, Whom hee loves, hee loves to the end.*

*Augustus Cæsar* would not suddenly entertain a league of friendship with any, but was a constant friend to those hee loved (*amare nec cito desisto, nec temere incipio*) late ere I love, as long ere I leave; *Alexander* the Great, cannot cut that knot of friendship that is tied betwixt Christ and his.

Where

Where Christ begins to love, he alwaies loves, *Jer.* 31.3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*: Now who would not venture the losse of all friends in the world, to gain such a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men and women, let me say to you, what *Seneca* said to his friend *Polibius* (*Fas tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Cæsare*) never complain of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cæsar* is thy friend; so say I, never complaine of your losse of Friends, so long as by losing of them, you gain Christ to bee your Friend.

Secondly, Thou wert better bee without their friendship and favour than to enjoy it upon any sinful and unworthy accounts, thou wert better run the hazzard of losing thy friends, and their favour, by seeking and serving the Lord in the Primerose of thy daies, than to run the hazard of losing God, Christ, Heaven, Eternity, and thy soul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace.

Mat. 16.26
Mar. 8.46.

It was a gallant return which the noble

noble *Rutilius* made his friend, requesting of him an unlawful favour, in such language as this, I had as good bee without such a friend, as with him, who will not let me speed in what I ask; to whom he replyed, I can want such a friend as you, if for your sake, I must do that that is not honest. The application is easie.

Well Young men, remember this, the torments of a thousand hells, were there so many, comes far short of this one voyce, to bee turned out of Gods presence with a (*Non novi vos*) I know you not. Mat. 7. 23.

Ah! young man, young man, thou wert better ten thousand thousand times to bee cast out of the thoughts and hearts of thy carnall friends, and relations, than to be cast out of Gods presence with cursed *Cain*, for ever; than to bee excommunicated out of the general assembly of the Saints, and Congregation of the first-born, which are writen in Heaven; and therefore away with this Objection. But, Gen. 4. Heb. 12. 23.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The favour and friendship of such carnal persons, is very fickle and inconstant, it is very fading and withering; Now they stroak, and anon they strike; now they lift up, and anon they cast down; now they smile, and anon they frown; now they kiss, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hosanna, Hosanna*, and anon they cry, crucifie him, crucifie him; *Haman* is one day feasted with the King, and the next day made a feast for Crowes; The Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King *Darius* his favour one day, and cast into the Lions Den the next; the Scribes and Pharises that cryed up *Judas* one day, did in effect bid him go and hang himself the next day.

Esth. 7.

Dan. 6.

Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5.

*Valerian*, *Valens*, *Belisarius* *Bajazet*, *Pythias*, *Dionysius*, *Pompey*, *William* the Conqueror, & many others have found it so

Such mens favour and friendship, are as *Venice* glasses, quickly broken, and therefore not much to bee prized or minded. Histories abound with instances of this nature; but I must hasten, onely remembring this that every dayes experience tells us, that wicked men can

can soon turn Tables, and crosse their books, their favour and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonas* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering; and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the Moon? But

*Glaucus*, who changed his armour of gold with *Diomedes* for his armour of Brass, stands upon record for a fool.

Fourthly and Lastly, Who but a mad man would adventure the loss of the Kings favour to gain the favour of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazard of losing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase the good will of the Prisoner at the Bar;

*Socrates* preferred the Kings countenance before his Coin; and so must you prefer the favour of God, the countenance of Christ, and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendship of all the men in the world; when your neerest friends, and dearest relations, stand in competition with Christ, or the things above, you must shake them off, you must turn your

Psa. 4. 6, 7.

Psa. 45. 10. Mat. 10. 37 Luk. 14. 26, 27.

backs upon them, and welcome Christ, and the things of your peace; hee that forsakes all relations for Christ, shall certainly finde all relations in Christ, hee will bee father, friend, husband, childe; hee will be every thing to thee, who takest him for thy great All.

Object. 3.

*But I shall meet with many reproaches from one and other, if I should labour to bee good betimes, if I should seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my youth.*

Now to this I answer,

First, What are Reproaches to the great things that others have suffered, for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good Conscience? what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the heart? what is a chiding, to a hanging, a whipping to a burning? no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with, to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Hebrews ch. 10, 11. read the ten Persecutions.

Ah!

Ah! Young men, you should be like the *Scythian* that went naked in the Snow, and when *Alexander* wondred how hee could endure it, answered, I am not ashamed, for I am all fore-head.

So should you in the cause and way of Christ, you should not bee ashamed, you should be all fore-head you should be stout and bold.

*Colonus* the *Dutch* Martyr, under all his reproaches, called to the Judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most beat, his or the Judges; all the reproaches in the world, should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not in the least trouble him, nor disturb him; But,

Secondly, I answer, That all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they do but add Pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happinesse and blessednesse. If yee bee reproached for the Name

of Christ, happy are yee; for the Spirit of Glory, and of God, resteth upon you; on their part, hee is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified; the more you are reproached for Christs sake on earth, the greater shall be your reward in Heaven, they that are most loaded with Reproaches here, shall bee most loaden with Glory hereafter. Christ hath written their Names in golden Letters in his book of Life, that are written in black Letters of reproach for his sake on Earth. 'Twas a good saying of one, A reproacher (saith hee) is beneath a man, but the Reproached that bear it well, are equal to Angels; of all Crowns, the reproached mans Crown, will weigh heaviest in Heaven. But,

1 Pet. 4. 14

Mat. 5. 11, 12.

*Chrysost.*

So was *Joseph*, *Mephibosheth*, *Naboth*: and in latter times *Luther*, whom they said died

Thirdly, I answer, the best men have been mostly reproached, *David* was, *Psal.* 69. 7. *Psal.* 89. 50.

despairing, when he was alive to confute it. And that *Beza* run away with another mans wife. And that *Calvin* was branded on the shoulder for a Rogue, but there would bee no end of this stuffe, should I say all that might be said.

*Psal.*

*Pſal.* 119. 22. *Pſal.* 31. 11. *Pſal.* 109. 25. And *Job* was, *Job* 19. 35. ch. 20. 3. *Job* 16. 10. And *Jeremiah* was, *Jer.* 20. 7. 10. Yea, this hath been the common portion of the people of God in all ages of the World, in *Nehemiah*'s time it was ſo, *Neh.* 1. 3. *And they ſaid unto mee, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction and reproach.* In *Davids* time it was ſo, *Pſal.* 79. 4. and *Pſa.* 44. 13, 14. And in *Jeremiah*'s time it was ſo, *Lam.* 5. 1. *Remember, O Lord what is come upon us, conſider and behold our reproach.* And in *Daniel*'s time it was ſo, *Dan.* 9. 16. *Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us*, And it was ſo in the Apoſtles time, *Rom.* 3. 8. *And not rather as wee bee ſlanderouſly reported*, as ſome affirm that wee ſay, let us do evil, that good may come, whoſe damnation is juſt, 2 *Corinth.* 6. 8. *By honour, and diſhonour; by evil report, and good report; as Deceivers, and yet true:* ſo in that, 1 Tim. 4. 10. *For therefore wee both labour and ſuffer reproach,*

Tertullian. *because we trust in the living God, &c.* And it was so in the Primitive times, for when the Christians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worshipped the Sun, and aspired after Monarchy, and committed Adulteries, and unnatural uncleannesses: Now who is troubled, who complains of that which is a common lot, as cold, Winter, Sickness, Death, &c. No more should any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Christ himself was sadly reproached, falsly accused, and strangely traduced, disgraced, and scandalized; hee was called a Glutton; a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and Sinners, and judged to use the black Art, casting out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils; Christ hath suffered the greatest, and the worst Reproaches, why then should you bee afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Christ hath wore before you? there is a great truth in what

Mat. 9. 34. ch. 12. 24.

what hee ſaid (*Non poteſt qui pati timet, ejus eſſe qui paſſus eſt*) hee that is afraid to ſuffer, cannot bee his Diſciple, who ſuffered ſo much; if the Maſter hath been marked with a black Coal, let not the ſervant think to go free. I am heartily angry (ſaith *Luther*) with thoſe that ſpeak of my ſufferings, which if compared with that which Chriſt ſuffered for mee, are not once to bee mentioned in the ſame day; But,

*Tertul. de fuga in perſecut.*

Fourthly, I anſwer, that all reproachers ſhall at laſt bee arraigned at the higheſt Bar of Juſtice, for all the reproaches that they have caſt upon the people of God.

They think it ſtrange (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the ſame exceſſe of ryot, ſpeaking evil of you: who ſhall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

1 Pet. 4 4. *Xenizon-tai Blaſphemountes.* Wonder and Blaſphem.

I am in an extaſie (ſaith *Picus Mirandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon thoſe now,

whom one day they will wish they had imitated. It was excellent counsel that the Heathen Oratour gave his Hearers (*Ita vivamus, ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur*) let us live as those that must give an account of all at last.

*Cic. 4. in Verr.*

St. *Chrysostome* brings in Christ comforting his Disciples against reproaches, speaking thus unto them; what, is the wrong grievous to you? that now they call you Seducers, and Conjurers, it will not be long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and blessings of the whole World, that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their lying words against you, and shall kindle the splendour of your vertue; So they shall be found Lyers, evil speakers, false accusers of others; but you shall bee more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your glory. Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But,

Mal. 3. 17. Mic. 7. 9, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 6. 3, 4.

Fift-

Fifthly, I answer, That God doth many times, even in this Life, bear sad witnesse and testimony against the reproachers of his people; *I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that curse thee*; God will even in this Life curse them with a witnesse, who curse them that hee blesseth; *Pharaoh* found it so, and *Saul* found it so, and *Jezabel* found it so, and *Haman* found it so, and the Princes of *Babylon* found it so, and the *Jews* finde it so to this very day.

Gen. 12. 3. 2 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13. Divine justice is like *Vulcans* Iron net, that took the Gods, it apprehends and condemns all that are reproachers, and enemies to his people.

And Oh! the dreadful Judgements and Curses that God hath poured out upon the Reproachers of his Name, of his Son, of his Spirit, of his Word, of his Ordinances, and of his People, in these dayes wherein wee Live. I might give you many sad instances of such in our dayes, whose feet justice hath taken in the snare, men of abstracted conceits, and sublime speculations, and indeed such usually prove the great wise Fools, who like the Lark, soareth higher and

and higher, peering, and peering, till at length they fall into the Net of the Fowler, and no wonder, for ſuch perſons uſually are as cenſorious, as they are curious.

Sixthly, I anſwer, St. *Paul* rejoyced more in his ſuffering reproaches for Chriſts ſake, than hee did in his being wrapt up in the third Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 12.10. *Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes, for Chriſts ſake, for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* And therefore you have him often a ſinging this ſong, *I Paul a Priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt*: not I *Paul* wrapt up in the third Heaven: Hee look't upon all his ſufferings, as Gods love-tokens, hee look't upon all reproaches, as pledges and badges of Son-ſhip; and therefore joyes and glories under all. Chriſt ſhewed his love to him in wrapping him up in the third Heaven, and hee ſhewed his love to Chriſt, in his joyful bearing of Reproaches for his ſake. St. *Paul* rattles his chain (which he bears for the

(*Crudelitas veſtra gloria noſtra*) your cruelty is our glory, ſaid they in *Tertullian*, fire, ſword, priſon, famine, are all delightful to me, ſaith *Baſil.*

the Gospel) and was proud of it, as a Woman of her Ornaments, saith *Chrysostome.*

Now why should that bee matter of trouble and discouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? shall hee look upon Reproaches as a Crown of Honour, and will you look upon Reproaches as a Crown of Thorns!

Oh! look upon Reproach as a Royal Diadem, look upon it as Christs Livery, and count it your highest ambition in this World, to wear this Livery for his sake, who once wore a Crown of Thorns for your sakes; When *Babylas* was to dye, hee required this favour, to have his chains buried with him as the ensigns of his honour. But

Seventhly, I answer, That by a wise and gracious behaviour under the Reproaches thou meetest with for Christs sake, thou mayest be instrumental to win others to Christ.

It was a notable saying of *Luther* (*Ecclesia totum mundum convertit sanguine & oratione*) the Church con-

Sufferings are the ensigns of heavenly Nobility, saith *Calvin.*

It was an observation of Mr. *John Lindsay*, that the very smoak of Mr. *Hamilton* converted as many as it blew upon.

converted the whole World by blood and prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ, by beholding the gracious carriages of Christians under their sufferings and reproaches for Christ.

VVee read of *Cicilia*, a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behaviour under all her sufferings and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

*Adrianus* beholding the gracious cheerful carriages of the Martyrs, under all their sufferings and reproaches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdome for Christ.

*Justin Martyr* was also converted, by observing the holy and chearful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the cruel Persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian Faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the oftner they were mown down (saith

See also the History of the Council of Trent, 418. 2. Edit.

(saith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And St. *Augustin* observed, that though there were many thousands put to death for professing Christ, yet they were never the fewer for being slain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wise and gracious bearing of Reproaches for Christ, bee instrumental to win others to Christ; and therefore never plead there is a Lion in the way; but I must hasten; and therefore in the eighth and

Last place, consider, how bravely several of the very Heathens have bore reproaches, and let that provoke you, in the face of all reproaches, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth. &c.

When *Demosthenes* was reproached by one, I will not, saith hee, strive with thee in this kinde of fight, in which hee that is overcome is the better man.

When one came and reproached

ed

ed *Xenophon*, saies hee, you have learned how toreproach, and I have learned how to bear Reproach.

And *Arristippus* (the Philosopher) said, You are fit to cast reproaches, and I am fit to bear reproaches.

*Demochares* an *Athenian* Orator, was sent to King *Philip* as Embassadour, *Philip* asked him, how hee might pleasure the *Athenians*, forsooth, saith hee, if you will hang your self; the Prince patiently sent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more Noble; the patient hearer, or venter of such unseemly language.

When one wondred at the patience of *Socrates* towards one who reviled and reproached him; if we should meet one, saith hee, whose body were more unsound than ours, should wee be angry with him, and not rather pity him? why then should wee not do the like to him whose soul is more diseased than ours?

*Augustus Cæsar* (in whose time Christ was born) bid *Catullus* the rail-

railing Poet to Supper, to shew that he had forgiven him.

It is a notable Example that wee finde of one *Pericles*, who as hee was sitting with others in a great meeting, a foul-mouthed fellow bitterly reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the Fellow followed him, and railed at him, even to his door, and hee took no notice of him, but when hee came at home, this is all hee said, Friend it is dark, I pray let my man light you home.

*Plutarch in vita Peric.*

*Josephus* reports of that *Herod* that is made mention of in *Act.* 12. 23. that when one *Simon* a Lawyer, had grievously reproached and scandalized him before the people, hee sent for him, and caused him to sit down next to him, and in a kind manner he spake thus to him. Tell mee, I pray thee, what thing thou seest fault-worthy, or contrary to the Law, in mee? *Simon* not having any thing to answer, besought him

*Themistocles* professed, that if two wales were shewed him, one to hel and the other to the Bar, he would chuse that which went to Hell, and forsake the other.

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him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and dismissed him, bestowing gifts on him.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathen make nothing of Reproaches, shall they bear up so prudently and bravely under the greatest loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you, who in your light, in your mercies, and in all Gospel engagements, are so highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may bee called to the Bar in the great Day, to witness against any of you; into whose hands this Treatise shall fall; and so much by way of Answer to the third Objection. But,

## Object. 4.

Fourthly, The Young man objects and saies, *You press us to be good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of our dayes, but wee observe that most men minde not these*

*these things, but rather give liberty to themselves, to walk in wayes that are most pleasing to the flesh, and why then should we be singular and nice, we were better do as the most do? &c.* Now to this I answer.

1. That though bad examples are dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow examples, than precepts, especially those examples that tend most to undoe them, 2 *Kings* 15. 9. It is said of *Zachariah*, the King of *Israel*, *that hee did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of* Jeroboam, hee would be as his Father was, and do as his Father did, what ever came on it.

*Præcepta docent, exempla movent*, Precepts may instruct, but examples do perswade.

So the *Samaritans*, of whom it is said, 2 *Kings* 17. 41. *These Nations feared the Lord* (that is, they made some kinde of profession of the true Religion, as the ten Tribes had done) *and served their graven Images* (too) *both their chil-*

*dren, and their childrens children* (did thus) *as did their Fathers, so do they unto this day*: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the main reason why the Kingdome and Church of *Judah* were so setled in their Idolatry, that there was no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembred their Altars and their Groves by the green Trees upon the high Hills, *Jer.* 17. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor Wax the impression of the Seal, nor Paper the ink, than youth is to follow ill examples.

You may see in *Radbod*, King of *Phrisia*, who coming to the Font to be baptized, asked what was become of his Ancestors, answer was made, that they dyed in a fearful state unbaptized, hee replied, that hee would rather perish with the multitude, than go to Heaven with a few.

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the

the adulteries and wickednesses of the Gods, said, what, do they so? and shall I stick at it? no, I will not. Sinful examples are very drawing, and very incouraging, many have found it so to their eternal undoing; those that have no ears to hear what you say, have many eyes to see what do. Bad Princes make bad Subjects, bad Masters make bad Servants, bad Parents make bad Children, and bad Husbands make bad Wives; it is easier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad; it is easier to run down the Hill with company, than to run up the Hill alone.

I would desire all Young men often to remember that saying of *Lactantius* (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) hee who imitates the bad, cannot bee good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream stood between Vertue and Vice. Solicited by both, chuse you must

*Æthiopians* lame themselves if their King bee lame, saith *Diodorus*. *Elian* reports that there was a Whore that did boast that she could easily get scholars away from *Socrates*, but *Socrates* could get away no scholars from her.

Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue, worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life, and that because it then indangers other mens souls, as well as a mans own.

who to follow. Oh! that you were all so wise, as to follow the best; as a Woman that hath many Suters, is very careful to take the best; so should you. Life, Heaven, Happiness, Eternity, hangs upon it.

But before I come to the second answer, let mee leave this note or notion with those who make no conscience of undoing others by their examples, *viz.*

*That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their occasion, or example.*

Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*.

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgement than *Ahab*. To sin (saith one) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your own to make you for ever miserable, why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest

place

place in Hell, will bee for them that have drawn others thither by their example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damned, he should bee double damned, because hee had largely contributed to the bringing of them to Hell by his wicked example; and therefore he desires that they might bee kept out of Hell, (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their coming thither would have made his hel more hot, his torments more insufferable; But

Mat. 23. 15

Luk. 16. 28

Secondly, I answer, *If you sin with others, you shall suffer with others*; if you will partake of other mens sins, you shall also partake of other mens plagues. They that have been (like *Simeon* and *Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they shall bee brethren in misery; they that have sinned together impenitently, shall be sent to Hell joyntly, they shall perish together eternally. If you will needs bee companions with others in their sins, you shall bee sure to bee companions with them in

Rev. 18. 4.

*Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit Augustin.* Hee burns no lesse that burns with company.

their ſorrows. The old world ſin together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in luſts together, were burne with Fire and Brimſtone together. *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, they ſin together, they murmure and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her mouth, and ſwallows them up together. *Pharaoh* and his Hoſts purſue *Iſrael* together, and they are drowned in the Sea together. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* committed folly, uncleanneſs together, and *Phineas* ſtabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors have a very pretty parable to this purpoſe; A man planted an Orchard and going from home, was careful to leave ſuch Watchmen as might both keep it from ſtrangers, and not deceive him themſelves, therefore hee appointed one blinde, but ſtrong of his limbs, and the other ſeeing, but a Cripple. Theſe two in their Maſters abſence conſpired together, and the blinde took the lame on his ſhoulders, and ſo gathered the fruit; their

Gen. 6.
Gen. 19.
Num. 16. 26—34.
Exod. 14.
Num. 25.

their Maſter returning and finding out their ſubtilty, puniſhed them both together.

So will juſtice deal with you at laſt, who ſin with others; therefore take heed young men of doing as others do. But

Thirdly, I anſwer, *You muſt not live by examples, but by precepts*; you are not to look ſo much at what others do, as at what God requires you to do, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither ſhalt thou ſpeak in a cauſe to decline after many to wreſt judgement*, Rom. 12. 2. *Faſhion not your ſelves like unto this world*; that is, do not faſhion and conform your ſelves to the corrupt cuſtomes and courſes of wretched worldlings, who have made Gold their God, and gain their glory; the running croſs to a Divine command, coſt the young Prophet his life (though he did it under pretence of Revelation from God) as you may ſee in that ſad Story, 1 *King.* 13. *chap. &c.* (*Non parentum, aut majorum authoritas,*

*Obedientia non diſcutit Dei mandata, ſed facit.* Proſper.

*Hierom.*

*sed Dei docentis imperium)* the command of God must out-weigh all authority and example of men.

And wee must bee as careful in the keeping of a light Commadement, as an heavy Commandment: saith a *Rabbi*, Divine Commands must bee obeyed against all contrary reasonings, wranglings, and examples. *Augustin* brings in some excusing their compliance with the sinful customes and examples of those times, in drinking healths, thus: Great personages urged it, and it was at the Kings banquet, where they judged of Loyalty by Luxury, and put us upon this election, drink or dye, the not drinking of a health had been our death; hee gives this answer, that God who sees that for love to him, and his commands, thou wouldest not conform to their drunken customes, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatned thee to drink.

The complaint is antient in *Seneca*, that commonly men live not *ad rationem*, but *ad similitudinem*. *Seneca de vita beata c.* 1.

Ah! Young men, you that dote so much upon examples now, will finde

finde that a ſtinging, terrifying queſtion, when put home by God, or Conſcience, *who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Iſa. 1.12. But

Fourthly, I anſwer, *Company and allurements to ſin, will be found no ſufficient excuſe for ſin.*

If *Eve* lay her fault on the Serpent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*, God will take it off, and lay the curſe on both. *Sauls* provocation by his people (and by *Samuels* long ſtay) to offer Sacrifice would not bear him out; but for his diſobedience, hee muſt loſe both his Crown and Life. The young man in the *Proverbs*, though tempted and ſolicited by the Harlot, yet hath a Dart ſtruck thorow his heart; though *Jonah* did plead Gods gracious inclinations to ſhew mercy, and his fear of being diſproved; yea, and though hee might have pleaded his fear of cruel and ſavage uſage from the *Ninivites* (whoſe hearts were deſperately ſet upon wick

Gen. 3.

1 Sam. 15. 14, 15, 26, 27.

Pro. 7. 14, 15, 22.

wickedneſs) and his deſpair of ever doing good upon a people ſo blinded, and hardened; and that they were *Gentiles*, and hee a *Jew*, and why ſhould hee then bee ſent with ſo ſtrange, ſo terrible a meſſage, to ſuch a People, nothing being more hateful and diſtaſteful to a Jewiſh Pallate; but all theſe pleas and excuſes will not bear off the blow; *Jonah* muſt into the Sea for all this, yea, he muſt to the bottome of Hell, as himſelf phraſes it. It is in vain for the Bird to complain, that it ſaw the Corn, but not the Pit-fall, or for a Fiſh to plead, it ſaw the Bait, but not the Hook. So it will bee in vain for Sinners at laſt, when they are taken in an infernal Pit-fall, to plead company and allurements by which they have been inticed to undoe their ſouls for ever.

*Oculos quos peccatum claudit, pœna aperit. Gre.* The eies that ſin ſhuts, affliction opens, and *Jonah* found it ſo

*Dionyſius* the *Sicilian* King, to excuſe himſelf from the preſent delivery of the Golden Garment hee took from his God *Apollo*, anſwered, that ſuch a robe as that was, could not

not bee at any ſeaſon of the year uſeful to his god, for it would not keep him warm in the Winter, and it was too heavy for the Summer, and ſo put off his Idol god; but the God of ſpirits, the God of all fleſh, will not be put off with any excuſes or pretences, when hee ſhall try and judge the children of men: But

Fifthly and Laſtly, I anſwer, *That it is a very great judgement to bee given up to follow evil examples*: a man given up to evil examples, is a man ſadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and deſperately hardened in ſin; it ſpeaks a man ripe for wrath, for ruine, for Hell, *Jer.* 6.21. * *Behold, I will lay ſtumbling blocks before this people, and the Fathers and the Sons together ſhall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend ſhall periſh.* Oh! it is a dreadful thing when God ſhall make the ſinful examples of others to be ſtumbling-blocks to a people. at which they ſhall ſtumble and fall, and periſh for ever; good had it been for ſuch

* This particle Behold, is ſometimes a note of deriſion Gen.3.22. 2 A note of attention often, Iſa.28 6. Mal. 1.1. Luk. 7.20. 3 A note of admiration often. 4 A note of aſſeveration. 5 A note of caſtigation; in all theſe ſenſes we may take it here. *Varr.*

ſuch perſons, that they had never been born, as Chriſt once ſpake concerning *Judas*.

The *Rhodians* and *Lydians* enacted ſeveral Laws, that thoſe Sons which followed not their Fathers in their Vertues, but followed vicious examples, ſhould be diſ-inherited, and their Lands given to the moſt vertuous of that race, not admitting any impious heir whatſoever to inherit; and do you think that God will not diſ-inherit all thoſe of Heaven and happineſs, who follow vicious examples? doubtleſs hee will, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5–12.

## Object. 5.

The Fiſt and laſt Objection (I ſhall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy, yea, a Sea, an Ocean of mercy, hee loves mercy, hee delights in mercy, and he is ready to ſhew mercy to poor Sinners, when they are even at the laſt caſt, when there is but a ſhort ſtride between them and the Grave, between them*

*them and Eternity, as we see in his extending mercy to the Theef, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosome, when hee was ready to bee turned off the Ladder of Life; and therefore I may spend the Prim-rose of my dayes in following sin, and the delights, profits, vanities, and contents of this World, and at last cast, I may have mercy, as well as the Theef. God is a God made up of mercy, and surely hee will not deny some crums of mercy to a poor Sinner in misery,* &c.

Now to this Objection I shall give these following answers.

First, *God is as just as hee is merciful*, witness his casting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise; witnesse all the Threatnings, the Curses, the Woes that the Bible is filled with, from one end to the other, witnesse the hell, the horrour, the terrour and amazement, that hee raises in the consciences of sinners; witness the devastations that hee hath made of the most stately flourishing Towns, Cities.

God is as well all-hand to punish, as hee is all grace to pardon.

Cities, Countries, and Kingdomes, that have been in all the World; witnes the variety of diseases, calamities, miseries, dangers, deaths, and hells, that alwayes attend the inhabitants of the world; but above all, witnes Christs treading the Wine-press of his Fathers VVrath; witnesse his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his displeasure and vengeance upon him.

*Valerius lib. 6. c. 5.* *Zeleucus* the *Locrensian* Law-giver, thrust out one of his own Sons eyes, for his transgressing of a wholsome Law, which he had enacted; but God the Father thrust out both Christs eyes for our transgressing of his Royal Law; Oh! the justice and severity of God. But

Secondly, I answer, That there is not a greater evidence of blindeness, prophaneness, hard-heartedness, spiritual madness, and hellish-desperateneſſe in all the VVorld, than to make that an Argument, an incouragement to sin (*viz.* the mercy of God) which should bee the

the greatest Argument under Heaven to keep a man from sin, as all know that have but read the Scripture: neither are there any Sinners in the World, that God delights to rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon such, who by their abuse of mercy, turn the God of mercy, into a God of Clouts, and go on out-daring Justice it self, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *And it come to pass, when hee heareth the words of this curse, that hee bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace (God is a God of mercy) though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:* The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie, shall smoak against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book, shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven. In these words you may observe, that God is absolute in threatning, to shew that hee will bee resolute in punishing, *Psal.* 11. 5, 6. *The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity, doth his*

Read Isa. 22. 12. to 16. & Eze. 24. 11, 12, 13, 14.

A lover of iniquity, is a liver in iniquity upon choice.

*his ſoul hate. Upon the wicked hee ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this ſhall be the portion of their cup.*

Ah! That all poor Sinners would make theſe two Scriptures their companions, their conſtant bedfellows, till they are got above that ſad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an incouragement to ſin.

Whileſt *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing aſunder the ſtock of an Oak, his ſtrength failing him, the cleft ſuddenly cloſing, was held ſo faſt by the hands, that he became a prey to the Beaſts of the field: All the abuſers of mercy, will certainly, and ſuddenly, become a prey to the Juſtice of God, that will rent and tear them in peeces, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 50. 22. *Woe, woe, to that ſoul that fights againſt God with his own mercies*; that will bee bad, becauſe hee is good; that will bee ſinful, becauſe he is merciful; that will turn all the kindeneſſes of God (that ſhould bee as

ſo

ſo many ſilver cords, to tye him to love and obedience) into arrows, and ſo ſhoot them back into the heart of God. Abuſed mercy will at laſt turn into a lyon, a fierce Lyon, and then woe to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But,

Thirdly, In anſwer to that part of the Objection, concerning the Theef on the Croſs, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

*Exemplum latronis ſervati eſt admirandum, non imitandum*

Firſt, *That as one was ſaved to teach Sinners not to deſpair, ſo another was damned, to teach them not to preſume.*

A pardon is ſometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who ſo truſts to that, the rope may bee his hire; It is not good (ſaith one) to put it upon the Pſalm of *miſerere*, and the neck verſe; for ſometimes hee proves no Clerk, and ſo hangs for it.

Secondly, It is an example without a promiſe, here is an example of late Repentance, but where is there a promiſe of late Repentance?

Oh! Let not his late and ſudden converſion, be to thee a temptation, till thou haſt found a promiſe for late and ſudden converſion; it is not examples, but promiſes that are foundations for Faith to reſt on; he that walks by an example of mercy, without a precept to guide him, and a promiſe to ſupport him, walks but by a dark Lanthorn, that will deceive him; well young man, remember this, examples of mercy increaſe wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them; But,

Thirdly, This was a rare miracle of mercy, with the glory whereof Chriſt did honour the ignominy of his Croſſe; and therefore wee may as well look for another Crucifying of Chriſt, as look for a Sinners converſion, when he hath ſcarce time enough to reckon up all thoſe particular duties, which make up the integrity of its conſtitution. But,

Fourthly, I anſwer, This Theef knew not Chriſt before, hee had

had not refused, neglected, nor slighted Christ before, the Sermon on the Cross, was the first Sermon that ever hee heard Christ preach, and Christs Prayer on the Crosse, was the first Prayer that ever hee heard Christ make; hee knew not Christ, till hee met him on the Crosse (which proved to him a happy meeting) his case was as if a Turk, or a Heathen, should now be converted to the Faith; and therefore thou hast little reason, Oh! young man, to plead this example, to keep Christ and thy soul asunder, who art every day under the call, the intreaties and wooings of Christ, But,

Fifthly and Lastly, I answer; The circumstances of time, and place, are rightly to bee considered; Now when Christ was triumphing on the Cross over Sin, Satan, and the World, when hee had made the Devils a publick spectacle of scorn and derision, when hee was taking his leave of the World, and entring into his glory; Now hee

puts a pardon into the Theefs hand, and crouds other favours and kindneſſes upon him.

As in the *Roman* Tryumphs, the Victor being aſcended up to the Capitol in a Chariot of State, uſed to caſt certain peeces of Coyn among the people, for them to pick up, which hee uſed not to doe at other times: So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the day of his Tryumph, and ſolemn Inauguration into his Heavenly Kingdome, ſcatters ſome Heavenly Jewels, that this Theef might pick up; which hee doth not, nor will not do every day; Or as in theſe dayes it is uſual with Princes to ſave ſome notorious Malefactors at their Coronation, when they enter upon their Kingdomes in tryumph, which they do not uſe to do afterwards; So did Jeſus Chriſt carry it toward this Theef; but this is not his ordinary way of ſaving and bringing ſouls to glory; and therefore do not, O young man! let not the Theefs late converſion, prove a temptation, or an oc-

occaſion of thy delaying thy repentance, and trifling away the Primeroſe of thy dayes in vanity and folly. And thus much may ſuffice to have been ſpoken, by way of anſwer to the young mans Objections. I ſhall now ſpeak a few words to Old men, and ſo cloſe up. Now

## CHAP. IX.

IS it ſo commendable, ſo deſirable, and ſo neceſſary for young men to bee good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their youth, as hath been ſufficiently demonſtrated in this Treatiſe? Oh then that I could ſo wooe aged perſons, as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to ſeek and ſerve the Lord, before their glaſs be out, their ſun ſet, and their ſouls loſt for ever.

Oh that that Counſel of the Prophet might take hold upon your hearts, *Give glory to the Lord your God,* Jer. 13. 16.

*God, before he cauſe Darkneſſe, and before your feet ſtumble* (through age) upon the darke mountains; and while yee look for light, hee turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs.

I, but aged ſinners may reply; *Is there any hope, any help for us?* is there any probability, is there any poſſibility? that ever ſuch as wee are ſhould return, and find mercy and favour with the Lord? wee who have lived ſo long without him, we that have ſinned ſo much againſt him, we that to this day are ſtrangers to him, yea in Arms againſt him: Is there any hope that we white-headed ſinners, who have withſtood ſo many thouſand offers of Grace, and ſo many thouſand motions of the Spirit, and ſo many thouſand checks of Conſcience, and ſo many thouſand tenders of Chriſt, and Heaven, that ever wee ſhould obtain mercy, that ever wee ſhould have our old hearts turned, our Millions of ſins pardoned, our vile natures changed, and poor ſouls ſaved? &c.

I answer, That there is hope even for such as you are; all the Angels in Heaven, and all the men on Earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you may obtain mercy and favour, that your souls dye not; with the Lord nothing is impossible, and for the grace of the Gospel, nothing is too hard: Now this I shall make evident by an induction of particulars. Thus.

First, All were not called nor sent to work in the Vine-yard, at the first hour, some were called at the third hour, others at the sixth, others, at the nineth, and some at the eleventh. God hath his several times of calling souls to himself: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-set, when it was even time to leave work; and yet at this hour some were called, imployed, and rewarded with the rest.

Mat. 20. 1, .. 17. The *Roman* penny was seven pence half penny.

Some of the Fathers by the several hours mentioned in this Parable, do understand the several Ages of man, *viz.* childe-hood, youth,

middle-age, and old-age, wherein poor ſouls are called and converted to Chriſt; the ſcope of the Parable is, to ſignifie the Free-grace of God in the calling of ſome in the ſpring and morning of their dayes, and in the calling of others in their old-age, in the evening of their dayes. But

Secondly, *Abraham* in the Old Teſtament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old-age, when there were but a few ſteps between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity.

Gen.12.4. Joh.3.1,2, 3,4.c.7.50

I have read of one *Cajus Nearius Victorius*, who was an old man three hundred years after the Apoſtles time, and had been a Pagan all his dayes, and in his old-age, hee enquired and hearkened after Chriſt, and ſaid he would be a Chriſtian, *Simplicianus* hearing him ſay ſo, would not beleeve him, but when the Church ſaw a work of Grace indeed upon him, there was ſhouting and dancing for gladneſſe,

neſſe, and Pſalms were ſung in every Church, *Caius Nearius Victorius* is become a Chriſtian; And this was written for a wonder, that hee, in his old age, and in his gray-hairs, ſhould become a gracious Chriſtian.

*Aretius* alſo ſpeaks of a certain man in his time; It is no feigned ſtory, ſaith hee, for I ſaw the man with mine own eyes, hee was one that had been a moſt vile and deſperate Sinner, a Drunkard, a Swearer, a wanton Gameſter, and ſo hee continued to his Gray-hairs; but at laſt it pleaſed God to ſet his ſins in order before him, and the man was ſo troubled in Conſcience, that hee threw himſelf down upon the ground, calling unto Satan to take him away, provoking Satan to take him away; Devil, take thy owne, Devil take thine own, I am thine own, take thy own: whereupon (ſaith *Aretius*) prayer was made for him; Chriſtians prayed; they faſted and prayed, they prayed night and day; and

and it pleased God at last, that this poor Aged sinner revived, converted to God, lived a godly life afterwards, and dyed comfortably.

Therefore let not the gray-headed Sinner despair, though his spring be past, his summer over-past, and hee arrived at the fall of the leaf. But.

Thirdly, Divine Promises shall bee made good to returning souls, to repenting souls, to believing souls bee they young or old, 2 *Chron.* 30. 9. *The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you if you return unto him*, Joel 2. 13. *And rent your heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for hee is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse, and repenteth him of the evil*, Isa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*: or he will multiply to pardon. More of this you may see by read-

Isa. 1. 18.
Jer. 3. 12.
Isa. 43. 22, 23, 24, 25.
ch. 57. 17, 18.
Jer. 51. 5.
John 3. 16.
Mark 16. 16.

reading of the Scriptures in the Margent: all ſorts of ſin ſhall bee pardoned to all ſorts of believing and repenting ſinners.

The new *Jeruſalem* hath twelve Gates, to ſhew that there is every way acceſs for all ſorts and ranks of ſinners, to come to Chriſt. He was borne in an Inne, to ſhew that hee receives all commers, Young and Old, Poor and Rich, &c. But

Fourthly, The Lord hath declared by Oath, a greater delight in the converſion and ſalvation of poor ſinners (whether they are young or old) than in the deſtruction and damnation of ſuch, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*: Turn yee; turn yee, from your evil waies? for why will yee dye? O ye houſe of *Iſrael*! Two things make a thing more credible.

1 The quality, or dignity of the perſon ſpeaking.

2 The manner of the ſpeech: Now,

Now, here you have the great God, not only ſpeaking, promiſing, but ſolemnly ſwearing, that he had rather poor ſinners ſhould live, than dye; bee happy, than miſerable; therefore deſpair not, O aged Sinner! but return unto the Lord, and thou ſhalt be happy for ever. But

Fifthly, There is vertue enough in the precious blood of JeſusChriſt, to waſh and cleanſe away all ſin; not only to cleanſe away the young mans ſins, but alſo to cleanſe away the Old mans ſins; not only to cleanſe a Sinner of twenty years old, but to cleanſe a Sinner of fifty, ſixty, yea, a hundred years old, 1 *John* 1. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*; not ſimply from ſin, but from all ſin; there is ſuch a power and efficacy in the Blood of Chriſt, as is ſufficient to cleanſe all ſorts of Sinners, from all ſorts of Sinnes; there is vertue in the blood of the Lamb, to waſh out all the ſpots that are in the oldeſt Sinners hearts; and therefore let not old Sinners deſpair, let not them

*una gutulu plus valet, quam cœlum & terra. Luther.* One little drop is more worth than Heaven and earth.

them say, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountain, the Blood of Jesus Christ is open, for all sorts of Sinners to wash in. But

Sixthly, The call and invitations of Christ in the Gospel, are general and indefinite, excluding no sort of Sinners, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock, if any man* ( mark the indefiniteness of personal admittance ) *hear my voyce, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and hee with mee*; let the Sinner bee old or young; a green head, or a gray head, if hee will but open the door, Christ will come in, and have communion and fellowship with him. So in that, *Matth.* 11. 28. turn to these Scriptures, and dwel upon them, they all clearly evidence the Call, and gracious invitations of Christ to bee to all Sinners, to every sinner, hee excepts not a man, no, though never so old, nothing shall hinder the Sinner, any sinner, the worst and most aged sinner from

Isa. 55. 1. Joh. 7. 37. Rev. 22. 17

from obtaining mercy, if he be willing to open to Christ, and to receive him as his Lord and King, *Joh.* 6. 37. But

Seventhly, Christs Pathetical lamentation over all sorts and ranks of sinners, declares his willingness to shew mercy to them; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,* (saith Christ, weeping over it,) *that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, &c. O that my people had hearkned unto mee!* Christ weeps over *Jerusalem*, so did *Titus*, and so did *Marcellus* over *Syracuse*, and so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*; but they shed tears for them, whose blood they were to shed; but Christ weeps over the necks of those young and old Sinners, who were to shed his blood. As a tender hearted Father weeps over his rebellious Children, when neither smiles nor frowns, neither councels nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil waies. So doth Jesus Christ over these rebellious Jews, upon whom nothing would work. But

Luke 19. 41, 42. Psa. 81. 13

Eighth-

Eighthly and lastly, Though Aged sinners have given Christ many thousand denyals, yet hee hath not taken them, but after all, and in the face of all denials hee still reinforces his suit, and continues to beseech them by his Spirit, by his Word, by his Wounds, by his Blood, by his Messengers, and by his Rebukes, to turne home to him, to embrace him, to believe in him, and to watch with him, that they may bee saved eternally by him; all which bespeaks gray-headed sinners, not to despair, nor to dispute; but to repent, returne, and believe, that it may go well with them for ever. Consider seriously what hath been spoken, and the Lord make you wise for Eternity.

Ps. 65. 1, 2 Rom. 10. 21.

1 Joh. 5. 2, 3.

Thomas Hamoling not

FINIS.

Thomas Hamoling
his hand and pen for
If the pen had bin
[illegible]

# Imprimatur,

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